

Questioning the Influence of Political trust on Individuals' Unconventional Political Participation in Palestine.

Mohammed Darkhalil

Abstract

Trust is an important indicator to measure the unconventional political participation, this study relied on the fifth wave of Arab-Barometers 2018-2019 and used ordinal logistic regression to analyze the relationship between political trust and political participation in Palestine. The results show statistically significant positive relationship between trusting political parties and Islamist movement and political participation. Trusting the president, prime minister, and government do not show any statistically significant relationship with political participation. This evidence contradicts with the institutional approach to explain the relationship between trust and political participation.

Introduction

Positioning trust in political context as examined variable took much more space in the liberal democratic than the less democratic contexts. This may go back to the nature of liberal democratic environments where individuals are more involved in public sphere. Studying the relationship between trust and political participation in non-democratic, illiberal democracies, hypered regimes, authoritarian regimes can be also interesting, particularly in the societies confronting kinds of conflict.

Individuals in Palestinian society confronting two types of conflicts. The external conflict with the Israeli occupation, on one hand, and the internal conflict embodied by the political and geographical schisms between the major two political parties; Hamas and Fatah, on the other hand.

Studying political participation in the Palestinian context is significant for some reasons: First, participation is multi-dimensional regarding the space of influence, they participate to influence the policies of the Palestinian Authority as a local political actor on one hand. On the other hand, they participate against the Israeli authorities as an occupation. Second, this multi-dimensional participation makes the situation vague regarding what motivate the Palestinians to participate, and the relationship between these two dimensions of participation. Third, participation in Palestine has its ups and downs, during intifadas for example, there are much more rates of participation.

This study relied on the fifth wave of Arab-Barometers 2018-2019 and used ordinal logistic regression to analyze the relationship between political trust and political participation. It is hypothesized that the higher political trust increases unconventional participation in Palestine. The results provided evidence that not all political trust variables have a statistically significant relationship with participation.

However, there is a statistically significant relationship between trusting political parties and Islamist movement and political participation. But trusting the president, prime minister, and government do not show any statistically significant relationship. These results contradict with institutional approach that relate trust with the performance of institutions.

Literature Review

Political participation has become an established area in political studies as a fundamental liberal democratic phenomenon (Barber, 2003; Dahl, 1983; David Held, 2007). It has been subject to the categorization where some researchers divided the participation into conventional and unconventional participation (Barnes & Kaase, 1979) on one hand, and institutionalized and non-institutionalized participation (Klingemann & Fuchs, 1995) on the other hand.

This study considers the unconventional political activism that includes protests and demonstration, unlike the conventional participation that includes usual patterns of political involvement such as voting and electoral campaigns. Pitti distinguished the unconventional participation for several reasons (Pitti, 2018): (a) employing innovative patterns of actions, (b) bypassing the norms that regulate a given political system, (c) expressing heterodox values, and (d) are considered forms of protest. The unconventionality of participation as Pitti clarified is because it plays a role as a distinguisher between the old and new, classical, and modern kinds of political activism.

Individual level of political participation has been categorized by Verba and Nie; completely inactive, partially active, and completely active citizens. These levels of participation are also related to four sorts of “activism”: voting, “particularized contacting” when citizens are in contact with politicians directly about their own demands, “communalist activities” when the political involvement is to influence general issues relevant to specific communities, and “party campaigns activists”..

Previous literatures provided models to explain participation in political context. Civic voluntarism, general incentives, and the bi-factor are the most remarkable models developed

by the researchers to explain the phenomena. While civic voluntarism focusses more on resources as crucial determinants to participation (Verba et al., 1995) (Brady et al., 1995), the general incentives model attempts to expand the rational choice clarification and to include social-psychological dimensions of participation. Seyd and Whiteley by the intensive model provided something more comprehensive because it provides distinct socio-psychological factors (Seyd & Whiteley, 2002): (1) collective incentives (2) selective incentives (3) group incentives (4) social norms (5) affective or expressive motives.

However, there are contextual challenges relevant to the institutional, legal, and cultural differentiations across the world, which requires bringing more adaptive and flexible models to take into account the particularity of different cases rather than developing a single model to fit all cases. That is very important because reasonably authoritarianism, for instance, would not be sufficient to apply a single model on all authoritarian regimes even if they shared the same region and language. Best example can come from the Middle East where authoritarian regimes in Syria and Libya witnessed extreme patterns of public participation, but this is not the case in countries like Algeria.

Accordingly, the multi-model suggested by Barrett & Smith can be more reliable to explain political participation where multi-dimensional factors including demographic, macro-contextual, psychological, and proximal variables (Barrett & Brunton-Smith, 2014). Furthermore, these dimensions interact differently and relatively in a complex way in the participation.

There is an underestimated number of studies that have been conducted to explain the position of trust as dependent and independent variable in different fields such as business, marketing,

economic, political, and social sciences. Studying trust in these diverse contexts indicating its significance in understanding human behaviors.

The measurement of trust requires a clear conception (Bauer & Freitag 2018). Using the term trust is not to indicate a behavior but an expectation. Contextualizing trust in terms of behavior produce “trusting behavior”. And discussing trust in this dimension means there is a “truster” A who judges the trustworthiness of B “trustee” regarding a particular “behavior” X in context Y at a certain “time” T. The previous parameters considering real time life can be replaced. For example, time is important because trusting is adaptive and changeable. Furthermore, trustee can differ, he can be an individual or a group of people.

Regarding the nature and sources of trust, trust is considered relational and seldom unconditional, where individuals tend to be vulnerable to another capable part to harm or betray them; regardless the other part being institution, group or individual (Levi & Stoker, 2000). Sources of trust are different considering culture (Buchan et al, 2002) and gender (Ashraf et al, 2006), satisfaction (Hetherington, 1998), and attractiveness (Parker & Parker, 1993).

There are deferent factors influence the status of trust in the political context. Citrin and Stoker mentioned some factors can possibly boost the trust (Citrin & Stoker, 2018). First, the existence of a dominant party helps in redistributing the balance of loyalties to the party. Second, the existence of a charismatic political leader who can increase the confidence in the institutions.

Trust is very relevant to effective functioning and stability of democratic regimes. Political involvement and the support for democratic values is encouraged by the institutional trust. Accordingly, the better political and economic performance the more political support and

involvement (Mishler & Rose, 2005). In his study to examine the relationship between trust and actions in European countries. Kaase found that there is a negative relationship between political trust and the involvement in a direct actions (Kaase,1999). His findings proofed that the lower political trust is related to the probability of involving in direct actions. He also found that trust is consequence or precondition of political involvement in its non-institutionalized terms.

Treating trust as independent and dependent variable, it influences human behavior such as reciprocity (Berg et al, 1995), kindness (Ashraf et al, 2006). The case of polarization produces distrust among a single group when a certain policy satisfies another (Miller, 1974). The evidence come from the United States, the feeling of distrust among the right increase when specific policy meets the needs of black Americans. This discontent among can lead dissatisfied individual to look for the change. The most important point proofed by this study that trust can be boosted in a single group rather than the other. It is also more accommodated with diverse voluntary association as Stolle found in studying the phenomena in Germany and Sweden, even if those associations are with weak ties (Stolle, 1998).

For handling social dilemmas, agents should be accurately aware of the others whether they are trustworthy or betray trust (Rothstein, 2000). Thus, collective memory approach is very important to be presented. Furthermore, Rothstein's suggestion related is related one of the most determinants of political behavior, images and perspectives built on a long-run process are very crucial in order to understand the individuals' and groups' behaviors in the society.

Rick argues that trust in its interpersonal context goes by many names such as dyadic trust, encapsulated trust, particularized trust, moral trust, and generalized trust (Wilson & Eckel, 2011). Nannestad considered two key dimensions in conceptualizing trust (Nannestad, 2008). In each of two dimension there are contradicted suggestions from researchers; First, the rational against norm-driven. Second, the generalized against the particularized. There is some example of the rational approach to trust such as the less or more well-grounded expectation regarding others' preferences. Furthermore, trust is rationally defined as a function of one's assessment towards others' incentives to increase his or her interest or to maximize the ability do so. On the other hand, norm-driven conceptualization of trust that it is not acquired but inherited through socialization. Accordingly, the calculations of utility do not take place as much as the experience does. For the generalized and particularized trust, they are related to the specification of the issue.

Psychologically, trust is treated as an individual's core personality character. The "psychological propensity model" as a bottom-up approach argues that trust is taught since the early childhood, and it is subject to modification regarding the hardship of one's experience and trauma. While trusting individual has an optimistic disposition in the ability of cooperation with other parts, distrusting tends to be suspicious, misanthropic and pessimistic of others. According to this bottom-up approach, (dis)trust is associated with social causes rather than genetic or psychological influences (Newton et al, 2018).

On the other hand, top-down theories considered a broader approach highlighting the properties of entire societies and communities. Accordingly, trust is strongly associated with social homogeneity, income equality and national wealth etc. It is also related to the collective

properties of the political system and social contexts. So, the outcomes of social and political are crucial in determining the levels of (dis)trust (Newton et al, 2018).

Institutional theories identify political trust in terms of cognitive phenomenon (Schoon & Cheng, 2011). That relies on the beliefs and knowledge about the trust in the institutions. In spite of its incompatibility with cultural approach, the institutional theories do not deny the importance of early life experience, but it includes more prior and important factors such as the performance of institutions.

Political trust refers to the feelings of citizens towards their government. It includes positive side when embodying the confidence, legitimacy, and supporting the system, and once the cynicism, alienation and political dissatisfaction are embodied, it is included in the negative side. This negative side can be seen as mistrust or distrust. While the mistrust reflecting skepticism on others' trustworthiness, distrust is related to a belief in the untrustworthiness of the other (Citrin & Stoker, 2018).

Political participation is one outcome of social capital, and social capital is defined as a generalized trust (Rothstein & Stolle, 2008). That because trust is considered the most crucial part of social capital as individuals are possible to have a membership in networks that includes untrustworthy agents. Trust in this context is not limited to face-to-face interaction, but it incorporates individuals who do not know each other personally.

Among the different approaches on trust and political participation. This study will examine the institutional-structural approach in identifying the relationship between trust and political participation. Because the approach focuses on the state's role as an important source of

generating social capital. For the approach, states “enable the establishment of reliable contracts between citizens because they provide information and monitor legislation about contracts and enforce rights and rules that sanction lawbreakers, protect minorities, and actively support the integration and participation of citizens” (Rothstein & Stolle, p. 444, 2008).

There is insufficient number of studies focusing on political participation in the Palestinian society except some qualitative works such as Spellings’ study who found that there is a critical relationship between the Palestinian individuals’ political activism and their parental interest in politics (Spellings et al, 2012).

Other literatures concentrated more in the participation of Palestinian women. For example, Jabali argues that the most active arena where women participate in public sphere is the non-governmental organization (Jabali, 2009). Samaroo founds a considerable gap between the position of Palestinian women in political decision-making process and the Palestinian legislations on one hand. And Palestinian political parties adopt instable attitudes towards the position of women in politics on the other hand (Samaroo, 2018).

Høigilt argues that Palestinian youth participation is very constrained because of three general factors, the Israeli occupation, the repressive polices implemented by the major Palestinian political parties; Fatah and Hamas, and the political schism between them (Høigilt, 2013). Casati also focused on the public environment that influence the engagement of students in political life and highlighted three relevant dimensions (Casati, 2016); first, the feel of estrangement vis-à-vis party-oriented politics. Second, the feel of vulnerability as a result to the internal repression of the Palestinian Authorities. Third, the dominance of neoliberal discourse internally in a way that includes politics to become a part of the consumption cynical approach.

Research Question:

To what extent does political trust influence unconventional political participation in Palestine as an unsovereign occupied society?

Hypothesis:

The higher political trust, the higher individuals' involvement in unconventional political actions in Palestine as unsovereign occupied society.

Measuring the Variables:**Independent variable:****This feeling of trust is towards: Ordinal Level**

- Individuals' feeling of trust is ordinal variable and measured by the answer of individuals about the level of trusting in the scale (A great deal of trust, Quite a lot of trust, Not a lot of trust, No trust at all).

Trust towards:

1. The government.
2. Prime Minister and President.
3. Political parties.
4. Islamist movements.

Dependent Variables: Ordinal Variables.

1. Participation in a meeting to discuss a public topic or signing a petition. Ordinal level variable on the scale (participated once, more than once and never participated).
2. Participation in a protest or a march. Ordinal level variable on the scale (participated once, more than once and never participated).
3. Using violence for political reasons. Ordinal level variable on the scale (participated once, more than once and never participated).

Data, Reliability and Validity

Arabbarometer is a quantitative research network covering social, political and economic values and attitudes of the ordinary population in the Arab World. It has been providing very important dataset on almost 14 Arab countries including Palestine since 2005. The participated institute that provides data is one of the most reliable research centers in the region; Palestine Center for Policy and Survey Research. This study will be reliable because of the high-quality data collected over 14 years. It covered all the Palestinian areas and communities with involving almost 2500 respondents. Furthermore, the questions asked in the survey provide a solid ground to measure the variable and achieve the goals of the study. Moreover, the study will focus in the development of variables over the years, not focusing on a single data set.

Results: (incomplete)

Order logit model of political trust and political participation in Palestine				
Predictor	Estimate	Std. error	t-value	p-value
Protesting or Demonstration				
Trust in Political Parties	0.60494	0.09867	6.1310	4.366421e-10
Trust in Islamist Movement	0.25943	0.07899	3.2845	0.0005108175
Trust in Government	0.17363-	0.09644	-1.8004	0.9641012
Trust in President or Prime Minister	0.08796	0.08877	0.9908	0.1608916
Meeting or Signing Petition				
Trust in Political Parties	0.62643	0.09709	6.4518	5.526468e-11
Trust in Islamist Movement	0.16344	0.07981	2.0477	0.0202947
Trust in Government	0.06363	0.09644	0.6598	0.2546911
Trust in President or Prime Minister	0.10709	0.08924	1.2001	0.1150503
Using Violence for Political Reasons				
Trust in Political Parties	0.50547	0.1285	3.9348	4.1633e-05

Trust in Islamist Movement	0.23791	0.1037	2.2942	0.9891105
Trust in Government	0.04859	0.1287	0.3776	0.3528639
Trust in President or Prime Minister	- 0.05300	0.1205	- 0.4398	0.669959

Conclusion: (incomplete)

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