

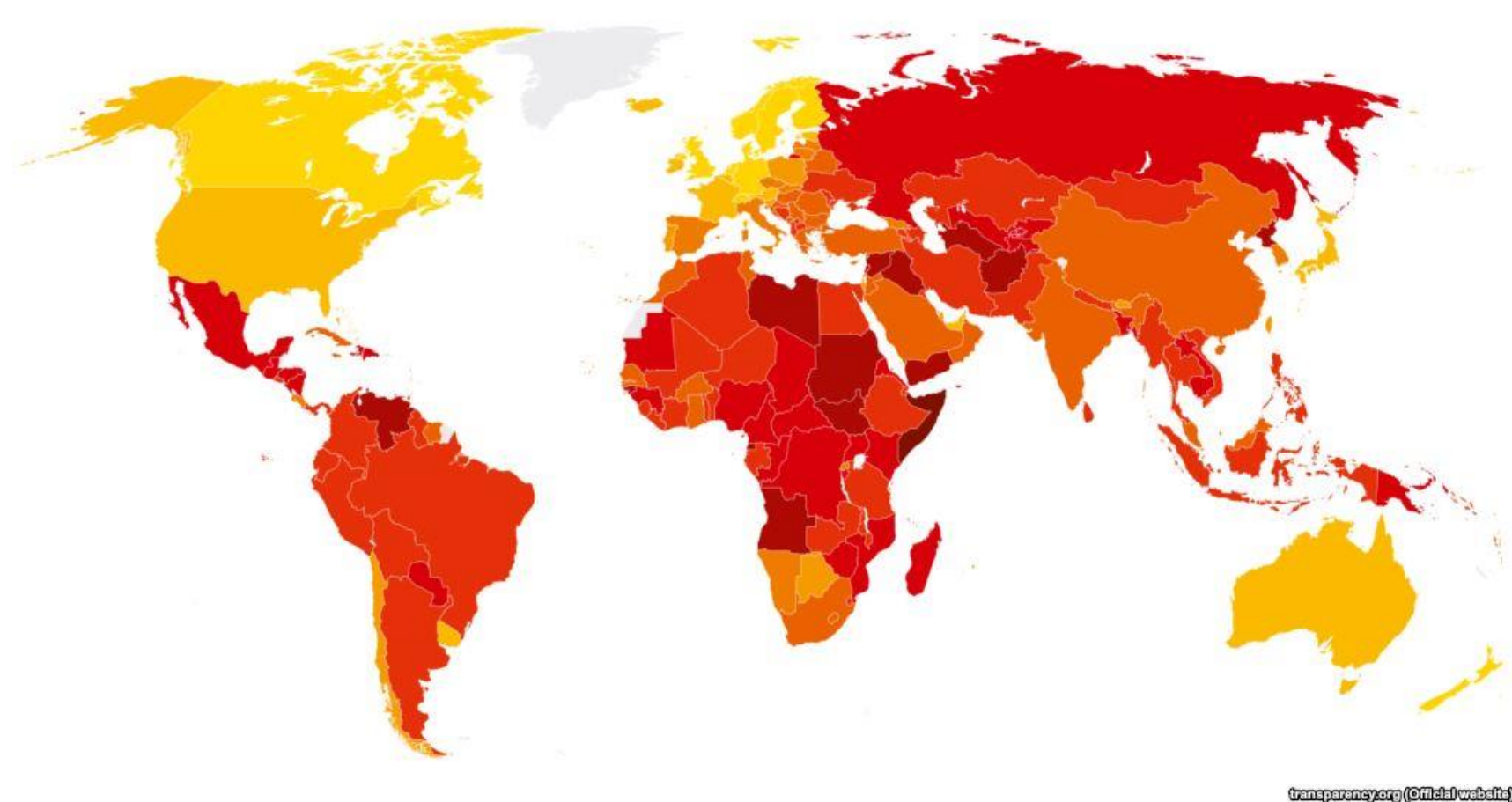
The Effect of Party Turnover on Government Corruption

Thomas Bishop, Advisor: Professor Matthew Winters

Department of Political Science, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

INTRODUCTION

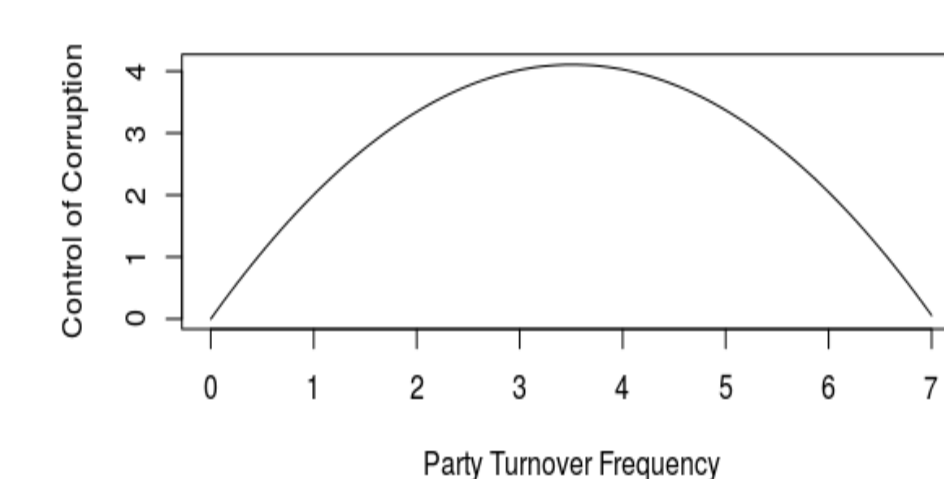
- Corruption, defined as the misuse of public office for private gain, is a persistent issue within governments throughout the international community.
- Higher levels of corruption are correlated with lower educational and private investments, poorer economic performance, and a mistrust of democracy in the most highly affected governments.
- Therefore, it is imperative for democratic governments to deter corruption in order to maintain the civil liberties of its citizens and promote national well-being in myriad areas.
- This thesis investigates whether relative accountability of elected officials, reflected by instances of party turnover in national elections over time, can provide democratic citizens an institutional mechanism to help control corruption in their respective governments.



METHOD

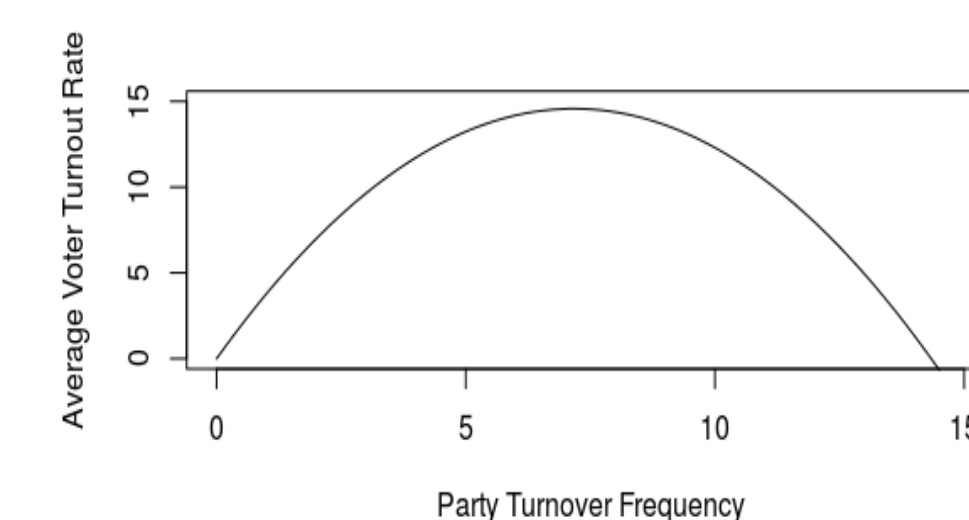
- A cross-national study, observing the frequencies of executive party turnover over time on corruption perceptions rankings.
- The outcome variable is measured as the preponderance of corruption in 2015, provided by three separate indices: Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI), Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), and Varieties of Democracy (VDEM)
- The main explanatory variable is the total number of instances the party of the chief executive changed after an election during the period of time preceding the 2015 state of corruption, data provided by the Database of Political Institutions (DPI)
- The study is separated into four time periods leading up to the 2015 state of corruption; Model 1 covers the explanatory measures within continuous democracies from 1975-2015, Model 2 covers 1985-2015, Model 3 observes 1995-2015, and Model 4 consists of the years 2005-2015
- Quadratic regression analysis using the following equation:

$$\text{Corruption} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * \text{Party Turnover} + \beta_2 * \text{Party Turnover}^2 + \beta_3 * \text{Media Bias} + \beta_4 * \text{Interest Group Advertisements} + \beta_5 * \text{World Region} + \beta_6 * \text{GDP Per Capita} + \beta_7 * \text{Election Frequency} + \epsilon$$



The expected relationship between party turnover frequencies and the corresponding control of corruption over time

- The second hypothesis requires a two part test.
- Regression analysis of party turnover frequency on voter participation
- If intermediate party turnover yields the highest levels of voter participation, it can be considered a potential mechanism of intermediate party turnover.
- Voter participation rates in democracies undergo linear regression analysis with the 2015 state of corruption acting as the outcome variable.
- Once voter participation is regressed on 2015 CPI scores, there is an expected positive relationship between voter turnout rates and control of corruption.

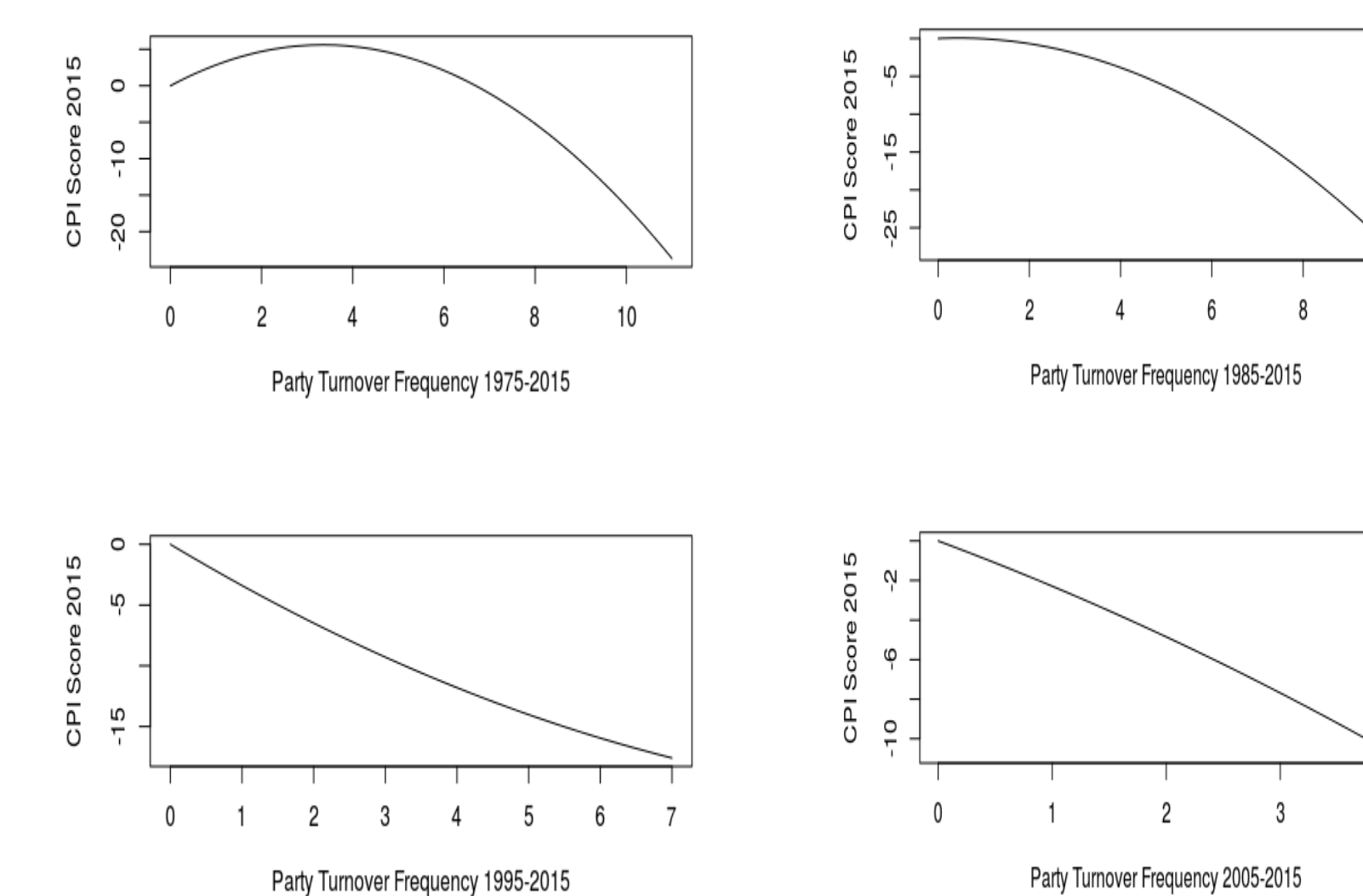


The expected relationship between party turnover frequencies and average voter participation

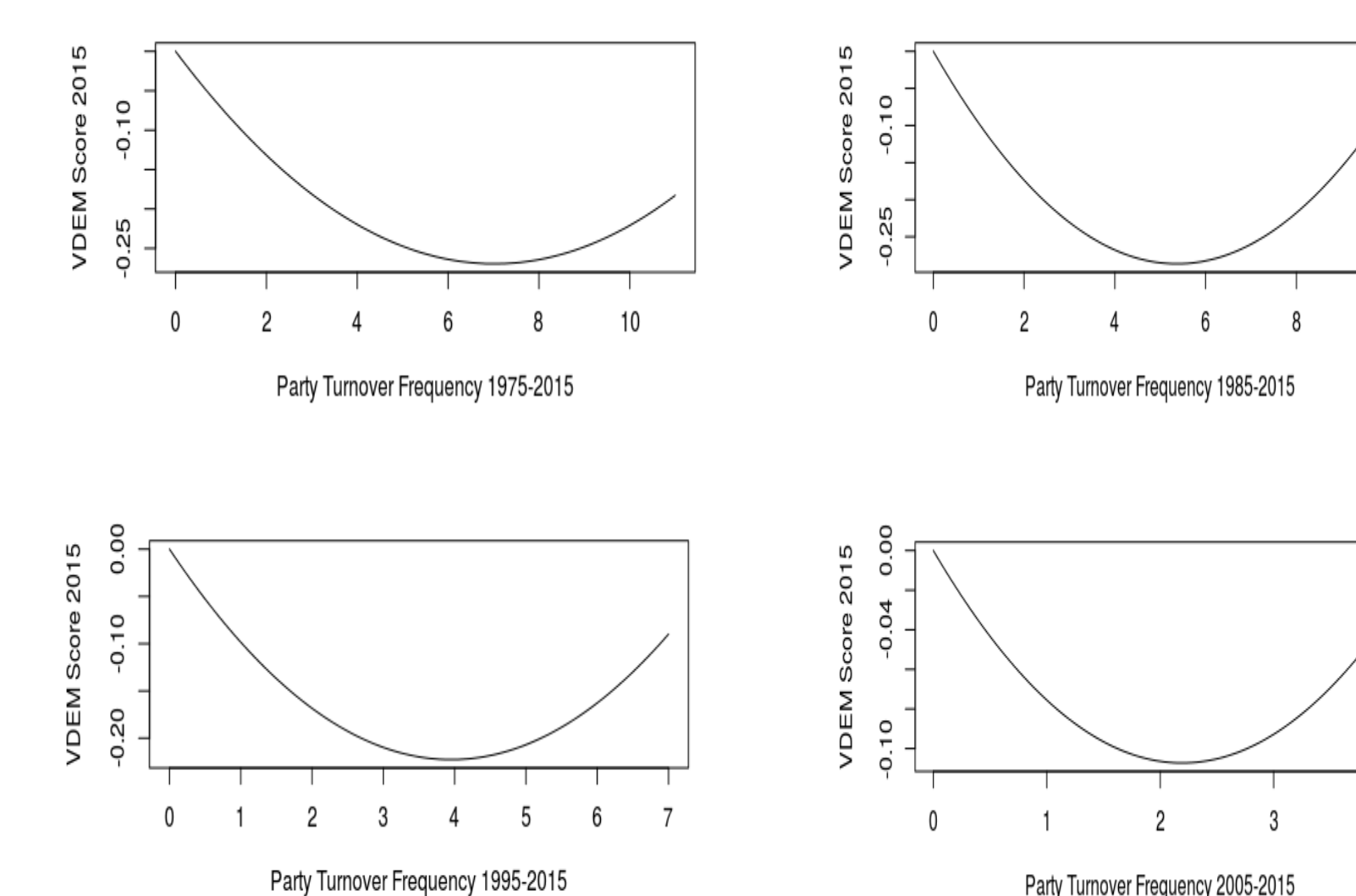
RESULTS

- No substantial support for the first hypothesis in most of the four quadratic regression tests.
- Using CPI and WGI 2015 Scores as the outcome variable, lower frequencies of party turnover is more associated with greater control of corruption.
- Using VDEM 2015 Scores as the outcome variable, intermediate party turnover frequency results in the greatest prevalence of corruption in continuous democracies.
- The second hypothesis test showed some support for the expected results.
- However, the linear relationship between voter participation and corruption lacked statistical significance, preventing conclusive evidence that voter participation is a mechanism of intermediate party turnover to help control corruption.
- Other factors such as media and interest group bias, economic development, and world region appear to have an effect on the state of corruption in 2015.

The estimated relationships between preceding party turnover frequencies and CPI Scores in 2015

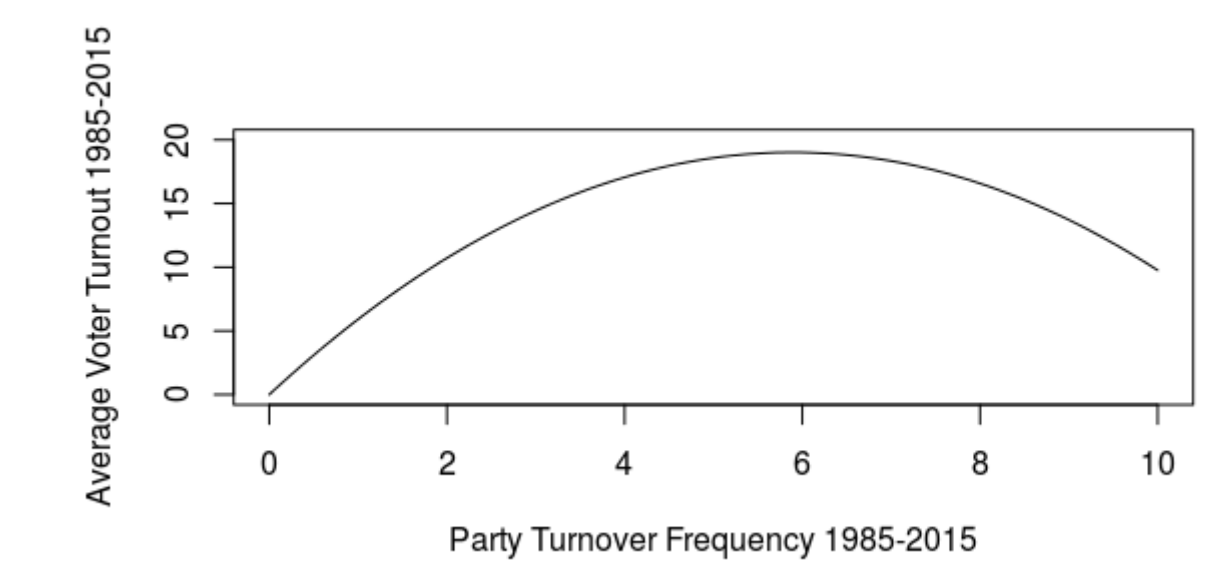


The estimated relationships between preceding party turnover frequencies and the VDEM Control of Corruption Index in 2015



RESULTS

Estimated results: party turnover frequency from 1985-2015 and voter election turnout from 1985-2015



Estimated results: voter turnout rate and CPI Score 2015

	(1) CPI 2015 1975-2015	(2) CPI 2015 1985-2015	(3) CPI 2015 1995-2015	(4) CPI 2015 2005-2015
Voter Turnout	0.0973 (0.196)	0.0808 (0.171)	0.167 (0.139)	0.133 (0.104)

Standard errors in parentheses
* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Includes controls for Media Bias, Interest Group Advertisement, World Region, GDP Per Capita, and Election Frequency

Theory

- It is expected that the frequency of party turnover over time will impact levels of corruption in democratic governments.
- If there are low rates of party turnover, elected officials within a specific party may feel insulated from the public and become prone to corrupt behaviour.
- High rates of party turnover, however, may indicate excessive voting instability by constituents, causing elected officials to act corruptly

H1: An intermediate frequency of party turnover over time will result in optimal control of corruption.

- Intermediate levels of party turnover will encourage the highest rates of voter participation, voters feel their voice has more of an impact than at the extreme turnover frequencies.
- High levels of voter participation help control corrupt behavior by elected officials who fear the consequences

H2: Intermediate frequencies of party turnover will result in highest voter participation, which then acts as a mechanism to control corruption

CONCLUSIONS

- Depending on the measure of corruption, preceding trends of party turnover have conflicting effects on the state of government corruption.
- This research does not support the hypothesis that an intermediate frequency of party turnover will result in the greatest deterrence of corruption.
- Unbiased media, politically diverse interest group advertisements, and economic development all help control government corruption.
- There are notable discrepancies in corruption measures, particularly CPI, WGI, and VDEM indices, which merit further study in the future.

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