

## Checking the homework

- Would it be possible to use an experimental research design to study these relationships? If yes, what exactly would be randomly assigned? If no, why not?
  1. An individual's level of religiosity (X) and his or her preferences for political parties (Y).
  2. Exposure to negative political news (X) and political apathy (Y).
  3. Trust in the Czech national government (X) and support for Czech Republic's membership in the EU (Y).

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## The plan for today

- Types of scientific contributions
  - Types of research questions
  - qualitative and quantitative research
- The importance of theory
  - What's so important about theories?

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## Types of scientific contributions

- An answer to...
- ... a question about the meaning of concepts/ actions/ behavior
  - Interpretative research
- ... a descriptive question
  - How many...? What does a phenomenon look like?
- ... a question about causality.
  - Does X cause Y?
  - What are the causes of Y?

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## Interpretative research

- Within the family of qualitative research
  - Not all qualitative research is interpretative
- Individuals and their behavior are tied to time&place
  - no general causal statements that would be valid across contexts
- Rather than using pre-defined concepts...
  - researchers listen to their subjects and ask about their understanding of concepts
- Different philosophical foundation
  - See the last slide for more info (if interested)

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## Descriptive research

- Description on its own - rarely big enough contribution
  - Needs to be relevant for a theory
- Example: How knowledgeable are Americans about politics?
  - The answer matters for theory of democracy, which assumes a certain level of political knowledge
- Hanania R. **The Humanitarian Turn at the UNSC: Explaining the development of international norms through machine learning algorithms.** *Journal of Peace Research*. 2021;58(4):655-670. doi:[10.1177/0022343320929728](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343320929728)

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## Questions about causality

- Most common type of Q in political science
  - Does X cause Y?
  - What are the causes of Y?
- Qualitative & quantitative research
  - We use Goertz&Mahoney definition of *qualitative methods*
  - "Two cultures"

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## Qualitative and quantitative research: Points of difference

1. Answers to questions about causality?
2. Typical number of cases? Why?
3. Effects of individual Xs versus explaining Y as a whole.
4. Typical research question
5. Providing general explanation & explaining individual cases

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## The importance of theory

Allison, Graham T. "Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis."

Answers to study questions

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## Summary

- **Theory matters!**
- Theory determines what *facts* and *causal factors* are seen as important
- → Strong influence on explanation of events
- → Strong influence on conclusions
- → Strong influence on recommendations given to policy makers

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## If you want to know more about interpretative research & how to conduct interpretative research

- Bevir, Mark and Kedar, Asaf. 2008. Concept formation in political science: An anti-naturalist critique of qualitative methodology. *Perspectives on Politics* 6 (3): 503-17.
- Klotz, Audie and Lynch, Cecelia. 2007. *Strategies for research in constructivist international relations*. Armonk, NY: M E Sharpe.
- Prasad, Pushkala. 2005. *Crafting qualitative research: Working in the postpositivist tradition*. Armonk, NY: M E Sharpe.
- Yanow, Dvora and Schwartz-Shea, Peregrine, eds. 2006. *Interpretation and method: Empirical research methods and the interpretive turn*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.

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## Examples of descriptive research

- Hanania R. The Humanitarian Turn at the UNSC: Explaining the development of international norms through machine learning algorithms. *Journal of Peace Research*. 2021;58(4):655-670. doi:[10.1177/0022343320929728](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343320929728)
- Early (descriptive) chapters in books:
  - Carpini, Michael X. Delli, and Scott Keeter. 1996. *What Americans Know about Politics and Why It Matters*. Yale University Press.
  - McLaren, Lauren M. 2015. *Immigration and Perceptions of National Political Systems in Europe*. Oxford, Oxford University Press.
  - And many other
    - Note: Replications of descriptive chapters of books (on different data, in different region) tend to be suitable BA thesis topics

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## Examples of qualitative research

- Adano, Wario R, Ton Dietz, Karen Witsenburg, and Fred Zaal. "Climate Change, Violent Conflict and Local Institutions in Kenya's Drylands." *Journal of Peace Research* 49, no. 1 (January 2012): 65–80. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343311427344>.
- JUNCOS, A.E. 2011, Europeanization by Decree? The Case of Police Reform in Bosnia. *JCMS: Journal of Common Market Studies*, 49: 367-389. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1468-5965.2010.02144.x>
- Benjaminsen, Tor A, Koffi Alinon, Halvard Buhaug, and Jill Tove Buseth. "Does Climate Change Drive Land-Use Conflicts in the Sahel?" *Journal of Peace Research* 49, no. 1 (January 2012): 97–111. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343311427343>.

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## Examples of quantitative research

- Lai B, Thyne C. The Effect of Civil War on Education, 1980—97. *Journal of Peace Research*. 2007;44(3):277-292. doi:10.1177/0022343307076631
- Nagel RU. Gendered preferences: How women's inclusion in society shapes negotiation occurrence in intrastate conflicts. *Journal of Peace Research*. 2021;58(3):433-448. doi:[10.1177/0022343319899456](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343319899456)
- Ringlerova, Zuzana. 2020. "Affective Attachment to the EU: Questioning the Importance of Childhood Socialization." *European Union Politics* 21, no. 4: 545–68. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1465116520950833>.
- Kreft A-K. Responding to sexual violence: Women's mobilization in war. *Journal of Peace Research*. 2019;56(2):220-233. doi:[10.1177/0022343318800361](https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343318800361)
  - combination of interviews and quantitative analysis