Time to change the time-for-change model?: modifying a U.S. presidential vote share prediction model with a measure of grassroots involvement

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Creator:
Martinez-Schiferl, Michael Andrew.

Description:
Thesis (M.P.P.)--Georgetown University, 2009.; Includes bibliographical references. Over the past two decades political scientists have produced models that take a scientific approach toward predicting and evaluating election effects and outcomes. This paper seeks to improve upon one of the most well-known U.S. presidential election forecasting models, Alan Abramowitz’s time-for-change model, by including a new measure of campaign performance. This paper tests the hypothesis of whether including a measure of small donor contributions, as a proxy for grassroots involvement as a result of campaign activity, is important to forecasting vote share outcome. This study finds that including the small donor contributions ratio in the time-for-change model does not change the signs of the other covariates. More importantly, the small donor contributions ratio is highly statistically significant, suggesting that the small donor contributions ratio may be a good predictor for presidential election vote share prediction models. Including the small donor contributions ratio improved the model’s goodness-of-fit and standard error of the estimate, but not necessarily the out-of-sample error. The results suggest that if the two-major-party candidates in a race have similar proportions of grassroots involvement, the incumbent-party candidate enjoys an estimated 2.2% advantage in the two-party vote share. If this ratio favors the incumbent 2:1, then the advantage is 4.4%; if the ratio instead favors the challenger 2:1, then the incumbent's advantage is reduced to 1.1%.

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The Time for Change forecasting model has correctly predicted the winner of the national popular vote in every presidential election since 1988. This model is based on three predictors — the incumbent president's approval rating at midyear (late June or early July) in the Gallup Poll, the growth rate of real GDP in the second quarter of the election year, and whether the incumbent president's party has held the White House for one term or more than one term. Using these three predictors, it is possible to forecast the incumbent party's share of the major party vote with a high degree of accuracy.

According to section 110 of the act, the US Department of Transportation (DOT) governs the use of DST. The law does not affect the rights of the states and territories that choose not to observe DST. Confusing DST Rules. Historically, there were no uniform rules for DST from 1945 to 1966. This caused widespread confusion, especially in transport and broadcasting. The Uniform Time Act of 1966 aligned the switch dates across the USA for the first time. Following the 1973 oil embargo, the US Congress extended the DST period to 10 months in 1974 and 8 months in 1975, in an effort to save energy. What we are looking at will be time series analysis and you will see that it is extremely difficult to create convincing synthetic times series data. By looking at the times series logs of the ballot counting process for the entire country, we can very easily spot fraud. One of the first things noticed while exploring the dataset is that there seems to be an obvious pattern in the ratio of new #Biden ballots to new #Trump ballots. As we can see on this log-log plot, for many of the counting progress updates, we see an almost constant ratio of #Biden to #Trump. It's such a regular pattern that we