

# L2929 Mid(ish)- term feedback

- Please go to the following Padlet:
  - [padlet.com/joegreenwoodhau/feedback](https://padlet.com/joegreenwoodhau/feedback)
- Add:
  - One thing you think is going well
  - One thing you think could be improved
  - Whether you would like to see more or less of the following:
    - Lecture presentation
    - Small-group discussion
    - Whole-group discussion
    - Other tasks such as designing a research project

# Methods: Qualitative, quantitative and experimental

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# Agenda

- Correlation and causation
- Interpreting quantitative results
- Brief discussion of readings
- Identifying research questions
- Designing a research project



# Correlation and causation

- Many things are correlated that are probably (or definitely) not causally linked:
  - [tylervigen.com/spurious-correlations](http://tylervigen.com/spurious-correlations)
- If things are causally related, the causality might flow in either direction (or both)
- Something else might be driving the correlation between two things (omitted variable bias)
- Something else might sit between the two things (mediation), or affect the relationship between them (moderation)



## Interpreting quantitative results

**Table II:** *Subjective social status and vote for populist right parties*

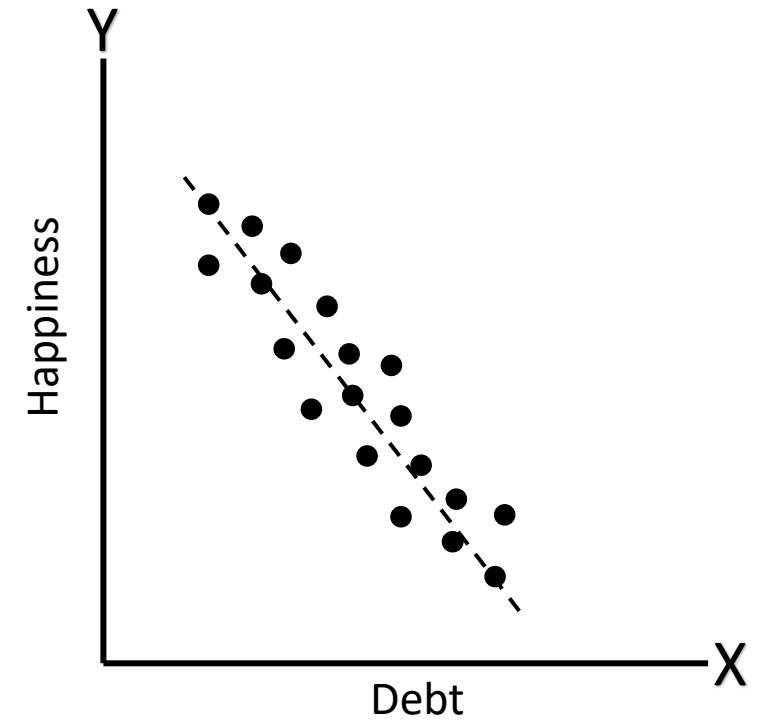
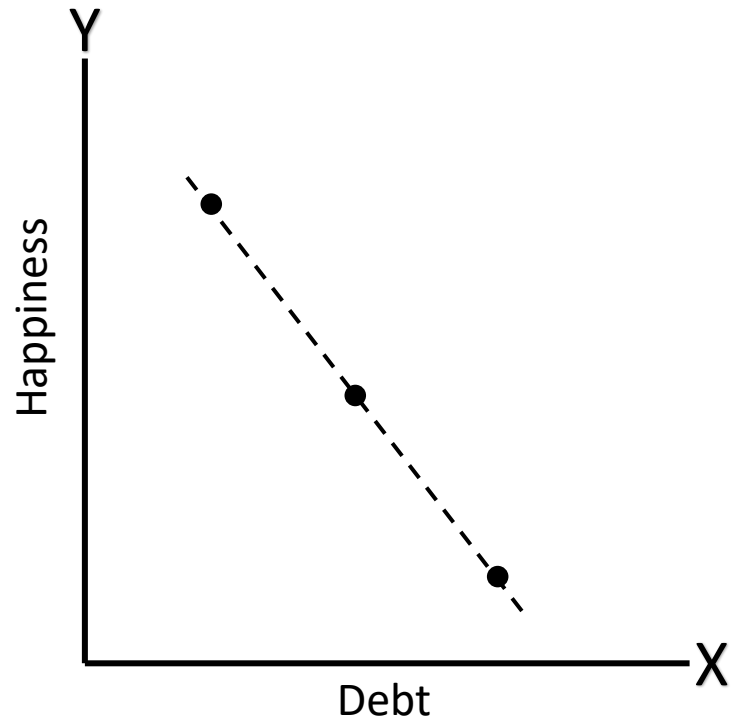
	<i>Dependent variable: vote for populist right</i>	
	(1)	(2)
Subjective social status	0.007 (0.006)	−0.004** (0.002)
SSS squared	−0.001*** (0.001)	
Occupation: managers		0.008 (0.008)
Occupation: office workers		0.033*** (0.010)
Occupation: self-employed		0.047*** (0.011)
Occupation: low skill services		0.052*** (0.010)
Occupation: Technicians		0.033*** (0.011)
Occupation: Routine workers		0.047*** (0.010)
Income		−0.003 (0.003)
Gender (1=Female)		−0.027*** (0.006)
Age		−0.0005*** (0.0002)
Constant	0.146*** (0.020)	0.180*** (0.025)
Observations	16,436	12,704
$R^2$	0.052	0.070

*Note:* Reference categories: for occupations: socio-cultural professionals; for urban-rural: big cities. For a list of parties and countries included in the analyses, see the Appendix. Both models include country fixed effects.

\* $p < 0.1$ ; \*\* $p < 0.05$ ; \*\*\* $p < 0.01$ .

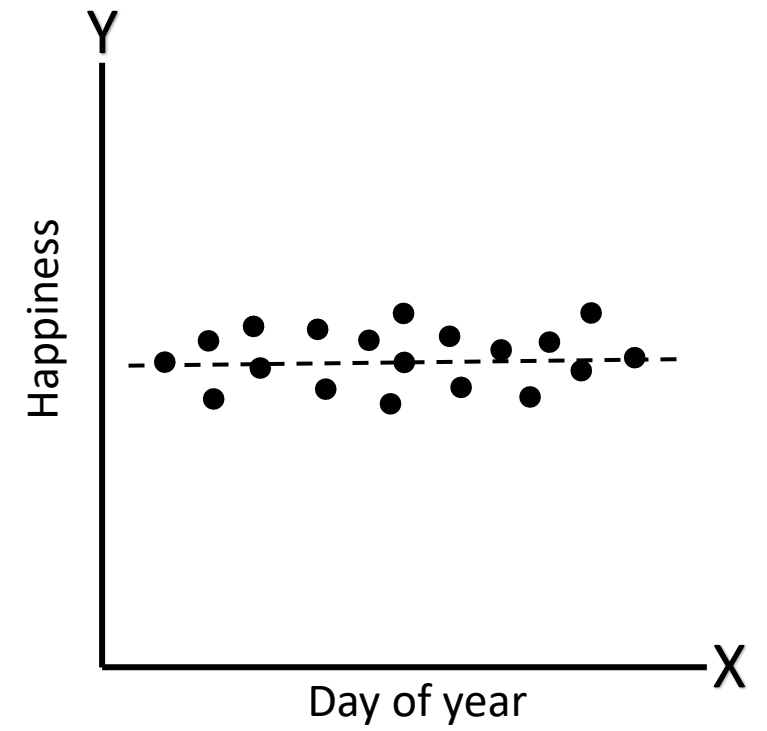
(Gidron and Hall 2017)





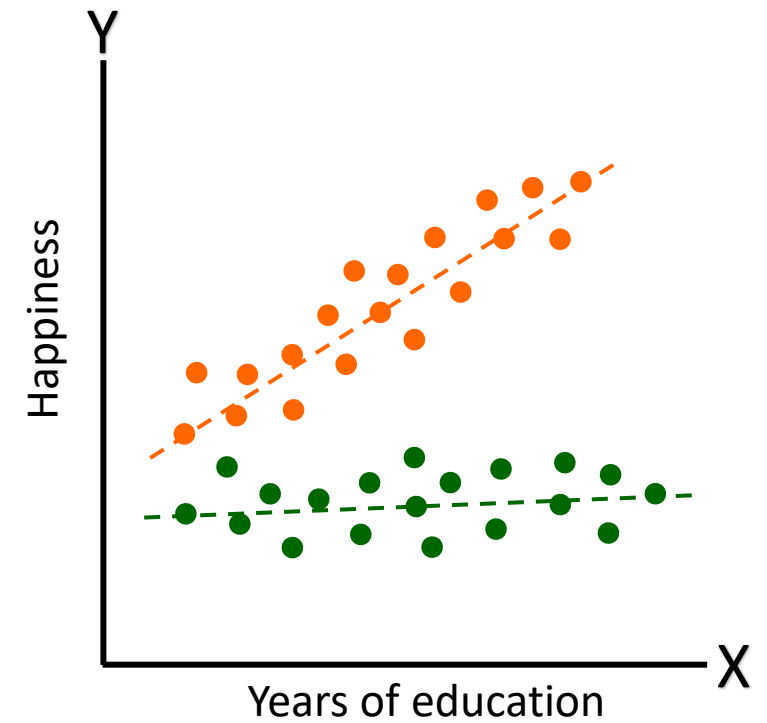
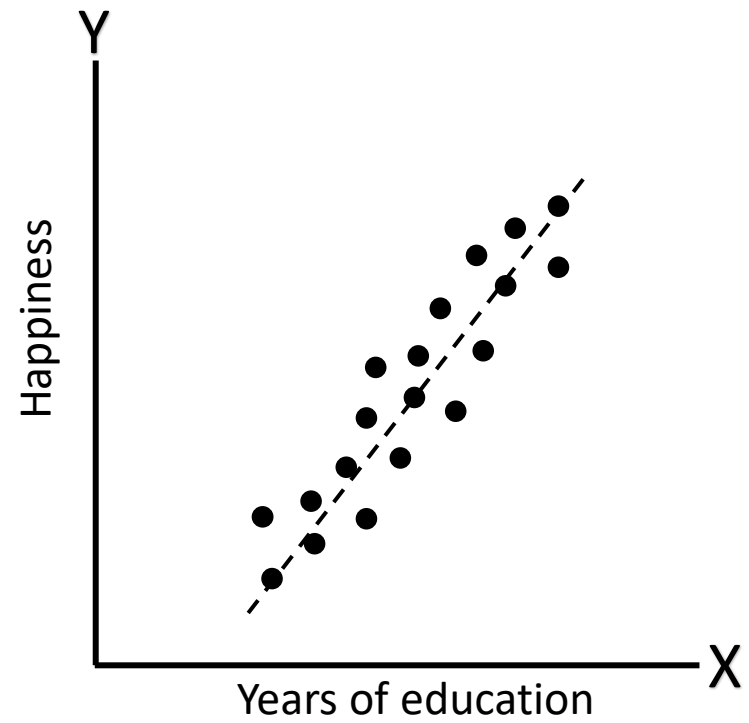
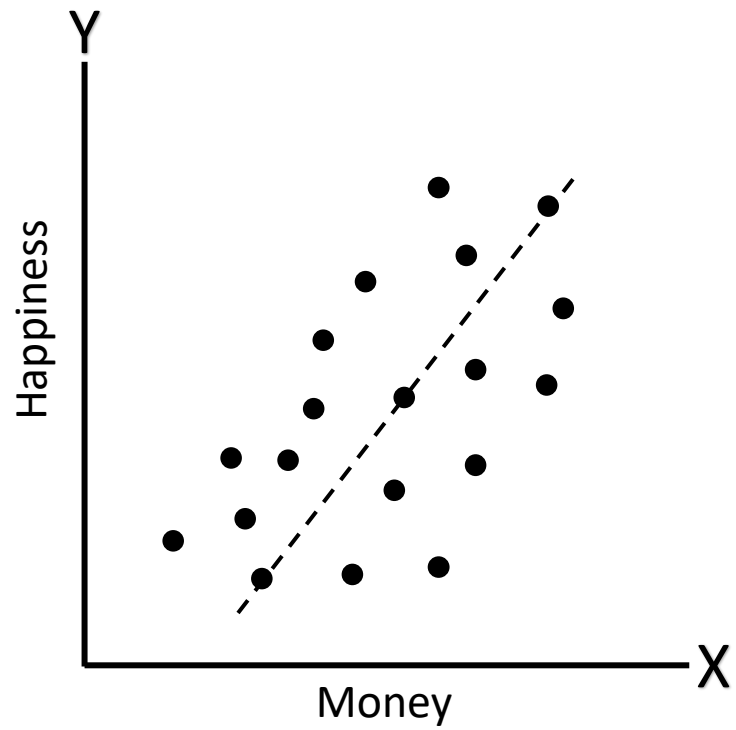
Interpreting  
quantitative  
results:  
significance





Interpreting  
quantitative  
results:  
positive and  
negative





● Female  
● Male

Interpreting  
quantitative  
results:  
controls and  
interactions



# Essential reading overview

**Campbell and Cowley** use a series of survey experiments to test the effect of varying candidate characteristics on public appraisals of approachability, experience, effectiveness, as well as candidate preference. Find minimal effects of biological sex, religion, and age, but much larger effects of education, occupation and locality. Also find that locality trumps occupation and non-locality significantly reduces support even for a co-partisan candidate.

**Gerring** defines a case study as '*an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units.*' Further, offers a typology of research defines based on spatial and temporal variations, and outlines the strengths of case studies compared to cross-unit studies.

**Nickerson** argues that the effects of social influence are hard to identify due to shared material interests, shared experiences, and selection of partners. Uses a field experiment to address this problem, and shows that turnout increases amongst other residents in houses where one person is prompted to vote.

**Roulston et al.** find that the main issues encountered by students conducting qualitative interviewing are unexpected participant behaviour, consequences of their own actions and subjectivities, phrasing and negotiation of questions, dealing with sensitive issues, and transcription. Encourage reflection on self and questions, and learning through doing.



# Identifying research questions

- In your groups, identify a research question relating to political behaviour that you would like to find an answer to. Consider:
  - Does your question relate to a real-world issue of political behaviour?
  - Does your question relate to masses, elites, or both?
  - Which of the approaches to accounting for political behaviour does your question draw on?
- Once your group has agreed a question, please note it on the Padlet:
  - <https://padlet.com/joegreenwoodhau/L2929>



# Designing a research project

Some things to think about:

- Are you aiming to describe some feature of political behaviour or the relationship between two (or more) things?
- Do you want to identify general trends or specific experiences?
- Are you interested in 'objective' or 'subjective' measures?
- Is there (likely to be) data already available that you could analyse?
- Practical considerations:
  - Cost
  - Time
  - Complexity
  - Ease