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Introduction: Survey and Experimental Research in International Political Economy

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Studies in international political economy (IPE) that use survey-response data sets and survey (or field) experiments have grown dramatically in recent years. New developments in survey and experimental methodology have arguably influenced IPE scholars not only to think more deeply about the microfoundations of the preferences, attitudes, and political behavior of key IPE actors but also to use survey or experimental methods to test causal claims and predictions. Yet the reasons for the rapid growth in survey and experimental methods in IPE are more multifaceted. We therefore seek to answer the following three pertinent questions in the introduction. First, what are the main substantive puzzles and issue-areas that IPE scholars analyze via survey and experimental methods in their research? Second, what are the main methodological advantages and drawbacks from using survey and experimental methods in IPE? Third, what are the key substantive theoretical and empirical insights that scholars have learned from recent research in IPE that employs either survey or experimental methods (or both)? In addition to answering these questions here, we also provide a summary of each article included in the special issue. The introduction concludes with a road map for future studies on survey and experimental research in IPE.

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Studies in international political economy (IPE) that use survey-response data sets and survey or field experiments have grown dramatically in recent years. But it would be inaccurate to presume that the use of survey-response and experimental research methods is “new” to IPE. In fact, a book published in 1963 by Raymond Bauer (a psychologist), Ithiel de Sola Pool (a political scientist), and Lewis Dexter (a sociologist) is perhaps the first study in IPE to use simple survey-response techniques to assess claims about firms lobbying politicians to influence trade policy. The core data for this study came from a survey of 903 business executives from US firms conducted by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC) in 1954. The results from this survey data challenged conventional claims held in the 1950s and 1960s about how and when firms lobby politicians to obtain protection from import competition.

The next example is a book published by Anna Merritt and Richard Merritt (1970). In this publication, survey response data from Germany in 1945–1949 that was compiled by the United States Office of Military Government is extensively analyzed. They employed this data to assess individual attitudes in Germany (1945–1949) toward issues such as their general economic condition (p. 131) and the “new” organization of Western Europe (p. 172). Another well-known early study is by Bruce Russett and Elizabeth Hanson (1975), who collected survey responses from 567 Vice-Presidents of Fortune 500 companies (based in the US) in 1973 to evaluate, for example, their foreign economic policy preferences. Finally, in his celebrated book, Robert Axelrod (1984) conducted laboratory experiments to evaluate whether tit-for-tat strategies in the Prisoner’s Dilemma game leads to cooperation between individuals. The findings presented in his book spoke directly to the study of international cooperation, which was (and to some extent still is) an important research topic for IPE scholars.

In addition to these works, a handful of other studies in IPE in the early 1990s also used survey-response data and methods. For instance, Richard Eichenberg and Russell Dalton’s article in International Organization in

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1 We focus on survey-response and survey experiments and field experimental methods in this essay but exclude laboratory experiments. This is because laboratory experiments—although increasingly popular in international relations (IR) (for example, Tingley and Walter 2011; Tomz 2007)—are less frequently used in IPE. Gray and Hicks’ (2014) article in this volume includes a laboratory component (if not a full-fledged laboratory experiment) in their empirical research design.

2 Russett and Hanson (1975:126) conclude from their survey-response analysis that the “domestic political ideology” of these 567 Vice-Presidents of Fortune 500 companies is a “far more powerful predictor” of their foreign economic policy preference compared to “their economic interest and motivation or strategic ideas.”

3 In addition to Keohane (1984), a number of recent works in IPE examine the politics of international cooperation in different economic issue-areas; see for example, Davis 2012 and Wood 1994.
1993 employs basic survey-response methods to examine the dynamics of public support for European integration in Western Europe. Other studies in the 1980s and early 1990s, which were mainly conducted by economists, also analyzed survey-response data to examine what types of firms in the US lobbied politicians to seek export subsidies or protection from import competition (Destler 1986; Wood 1994). Concerted efforts toward utilizing standard survey-response or newly developed experimental methods, however, did not make much progress during the latter half of the 1990s. Instead scholars primarily focused on developing comprehensive theoretical models to understand the monetary policy choices of states, the impact of democracy on international trade and capital account policies, and the determinants of trade, as well as financial policy preferences of voters, firms, and policymakers in particularly advanced industrial democracies (see for example, Bearce 2002; Freeman and Houser 1998; Frieden 1990, 1991; Frieden and Rogowski 1996; Hiscox 1999; Mansfield, Milner, and Rosendorff 2000; Quinn 1997).

The following articles that used unique survey-response data sets to assess theoretical claims about trade policy preferences, however, reinvigorated the use of survey and experimental research methods in IPE (Mayda and Rodrik 2005; O’Rourke and Sinnott 2001; Scheve and Slaughter 2001a, 2001b). As shown briefly in the next section, there has in fact been a rapid acceleration of research in IPE that actively employs survey-response data sets, survey experiments, and field experiments following the publication of the articles previously mentioned. We explain in the following section why students of IPE increasingly employ survey and experimental methods in their research. It is important to note here, however, that the rapid growth in these methods in IPE raises three main questions:

- Which questions and issue-areas in IPE are often analyzed by scholars via the use of conventional survey-response techniques and experimental methods?
- What are the new developments as well as insights gained from the application of survey and experimental methods in IPE?
- What are the advantages and limits of survey-response techniques, survey, and field (or laboratory) experiments when analyzing substantive topics of interest to IPE scholars?

This special issue addresses these questions. The articles in this volume focus on a wide range of topics—for example, individual attitudes toward immigration, the effect of financial crisis on the behavior of voters, perceptions of foreign investors, and support for agricultural subsidies by voters—that are of great interest to students of IPE. Yet a common thread that binds these articles together is that they use either survey-response methods
or survey experiments to derive and present substantively important insights. By doing so, these articles thus provide a useful stock of new developments and lessons learned from the application of survey and experimental methods in IPE.

The remainder of this article is organized as follows. We explain in the next section why the application of survey-response and experimental methods in IPE has grown sharply in recent years. This is followed by a discussion of the advantages and limits of these methods. We then provide a summary of each article and commentary contained in this special issue. The article ends with a brief conclusion that discusses the next steps that scholars should ideally take to ensure that IPE as a field benefits substantively from survey-response and experimental methods.

SURVEY-RESPONSE AND EXPERIMENTAL METHODS IN IPE: A GROWTH INDUSTRY

We begin by providing some simple definitions of what the terms used by researchers mean: survey-response methods, survey experiments, field experiments, and laboratory experiments. Stated broadly, survey-response methods include collecting and analyzing data gathered from individual or firm responses to survey questions about their personal characteristics and their attitudes (in an IPE context) in issue areas such as immigration, monetary policy, investment, and trade liberalization. Survey experiments embed randomized experiments within individual surveys to understand the effects of providing certain types of information about economic policy outcomes to citizens, owners of firms, and even policymakers. Laboratory experiments involve the random assignment of a treatment to research subjects in the controlled world of university laboratories. Field experiments examine an intervention in the “real world” by randomizing subjects into treatment and control groups and comparing outcomes between these groups. The experimental methods allow scholars to directly evaluate causal relationships by, for instance, testing whether randomized variation in $x$ causes a change in $y$. Conventional survey-response methods are, however, better equipped to assess claims about the attitudes of individual, lobbying associations or firms toward economic and political issue-areas.

There has been a rapid acceleration in the use of survey-response as well as survey and field experimental methods in IPE. This is confirmed by a quick analysis of the number of articles that use either one of the four kinds of research methods delineated in the preceding paragraph (1) presented at the annual International Political Economy Society (IPES) conference since

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4Embedding experimental designs within surveys has increasingly been recognized as a flexible and powerful means to combine the internal validity of experiments with the external validity of surveys.
2006 that apply survey research or experimental methods and (2) published on key IPE topics—this includes trade, monetary policy, immigration, foreign investment, environmental policy, foreign aid, and financial crisis—in nine political science and economics journals since 2001.\(^5\) According to the IPES conference Web site,\(^6\) four papers were presented at the inaugural IPES conference in 2006 that applied survey-response or experimental methods. This number increased to six papers at the 2008 IPES conference and has consistently stayed at either five or six papers per conference from 2009 to 2012. A cursory examination of the journals reveals a more dramatic upward trend. For instance, we find in 2001 that an “approximate” total of 15 published papers used either survey methodology or one of the three experimental methods mentioned earlier.\(^7\) Of these 15 papers, 13 employed survey-response datasets, while the remaining two articles applied survey experiments. By 2012, this number increased to (again an approximate) total of 56 published articles that used either survey-response techniques or any one of the three experimental research methods examined here.

What accounts for the recent acceleration of not only conventional survey-response techniques but also experimental research methods in IPE? Three main reasons can be put forth to answer this question. The first is that the growth in the application of these methods is in part driven by the development of more refined theoretical arguments about the preferences and behavior of central actors in IPE and the desire to test these arguments. Specifically, observe that two early but seminal works in IPE—Helen Milner’s *Resisting Protectionism* published in 1988 and Jeffrey Frieden’s *Invested Interests* in 1991—theoretically analyzed how certain economic and political factors shape the preferences, political behavior, and strategies of key societal actors (voters, firms, and interest groups) in the case of trade policy (Milner 1988) and monetary as well as financial policies (Frieden 1991). Some scholars (largely economists) also constructed new general equilibrium and game-theoretic models that explore the economic preferences and “Nash” behavior of consumers, import-competing firms, financial market traders, and government officials in issue-areas as diverse as immigration, trade, and monetary policy (Alesina 1989; Borjas 2003; Chang and Velasco 2000; Freeman and Houser 1998; Grossman and Helpman 1994). The theoretical developments in these and similar studies provided an impetus for IPE researchers to employ survey-response and experimental testing methods. This is because

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\(^6\)https://ncgg.princeton.edu/IPES/conferences.php.

\(^7\)We deliberately use the word “approximate” because this number is based on—as mentioned previously—a cursory examination rather than a careful study of published papers on IPE across these journals that employ either survey or the different kinds of experimental methods defined earlier.
the main *microlevel* predictions—that is, predictions about the preferences and behavior of societal actors (for example, voters)—in these studies lend themselves to direct testing via both survey-response and experimental methods. Further, once scholars began using survey and experimental methods, a new empirical research agenda emerged where it became “more acceptable” for researchers to publish papers that almost exclusively focused on the design of experiments and the results obtained from these experiments.

The second reason is that technological innovations have made it more feasible and cost-effective for academics to conduct survey experiments. The emergence of Internet surveys and Time-Sharing Experiments for Social Sciences (TESS) sharply lowered the transaction costs of conducting survey experiments and has enabled researchers to sample large sections of the population. These survey experiments can be administered as part of a larger survey, such as the Cooperative Congressional Election Survey, or can be fielded through survey firms or directly through platforms such as Amazon’s Mechanical Turk. Additionally, because surveys administered over the Internet can incorporate sounds, video, photographs, and graphics, it makes it easier for scholars to conduct elaborate survey experiments.

Finally, we argue that the adoption of survey and field experiments in development economics has inspired IPE scholars to emulate the use of this research technique for their own empirical research. Many topics analyzed by development economists including trade liberalization, foreign direct investment, and foreign aid are also studied by students of IPE. More importantly, development economists who explore these issue-areas have themselves increasingly turned to the application of field experiments, for example, to assess microlevel predictions from their formal models (Desai, Foley, and Hines 2008; Engelmann and Normann 2007). It is thus not surprising that some IPE scholars whose research interests overlap with those of development economists have been more receptive toward the application of experimental methods in their research (Hiscox and Smyth 2012; Jensen and Lindstaedt 2013; Lu, Scheve, and Slaughter 2012; Milner, Nielson, and Findley 2013). Several other claims can be put forth to explain the recent acceleration in the use of survey-response and experimental methods in IPE. Ultimately, what matters is whether IPE as a field has gained from the use of these methods.

ADVANTAGES AND LIMITS OF SURVEY AND EXPERIMENTAL RESEARCH

The fact that IPE scholars are increasingly using standard survey-response analysis and more recently survey and field experiment research methods raises the question: what are the advantages of using such methods in the context of IPE? A series of recent works by political scientists have
discussed in depth the methodological advantages of employing data from survey respondents and experimental designs (for example, Druckman, Green, Kuklinski, and Lupia 2006; Gaines, Kuklinski, and Quirk 2007; Mutz 2011). We will not repeat the claims put forth in these studies, as these are well known and accessible to a wide audience. Rather we first briefly discuss the three main advantages that emerge from using standard survey-response techniques and experimental methods for specifically the field of IPE. We then describe some of the limitations from using such research methods.

The first advantage of both survey-response and experimental methods is that they can be used to evaluate directly microfoundations of macrolevel theories in IPE. To see why, consider the Heckscher-Ohlin (H-O) model that IPE scholars have extensively employed as a deductive tool to develop theories about trade and monetary policy outcomes as well as other financial policies of states (Frieden 1990, 1991; Milner and Kubota 2005; Milner and Mukherjee 2009). With respect to trade policy—and particularly preferences with respect to trade policy—the H-O model broadly suggests that in capital-abundant (i.e., advanced industrial) countries, the scarce factor (which implies workers) will favor more trade protection (Dutt and Mitra 2002; Rogowski 1989; Scheve and Slaughter 2001a). Conversely, in labor-abundant (that is, developing) economies, workers as the abundant factor will be on average more receptive to trade liberalization (Milner and Kubota 2005; Milner and Mukherjee 2009). Scholars have used these simple yet compelling claims that emerge from the H-O model to explain, for instance, why democratization leads to trade reforms in developing countries and why left-leaning parties in advanced industrial democracies implement higher trade barriers (Dutt and Mitra 2002; Milner and Judkins 2004; Milner and Kubota 2005). But is the claim that workers prefer trade protection in developed economies but not in developing countries empirically valid?

A country-year research design and data set cannot directly test microlevel claims about the trade policy preferences of workers, even though such a data set is necessary for testing the broad aggregate claims of the studies mentioned. Instead scholars have to use personal interviews, survey-response methods or survey experiments to statistically evaluate claims about the trade policy preferences held by workers. It is not surprising then that extant research has used within-country survey-response data, cross-national survey-response data sets, and also survey experiments to test well-established theoretical claims about trade policy preferences of not only workers but also firms in advanced industrial democracies (for example, Lu et al. 2012; Mayda and Rodrik 2005; Naoi and Kume 2011; O’Rourke and Sinott 2001; Scheve and Slaughter 2001a). The use of survey-response and

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8The assumptions and the logical validity of the H-O model have been challenged by numerous scholars as well.
experimental methods to evaluate the trade policy choices of voters and firms is merely one example. These methods are in fact also used to test claims about monetary policy preferences, the behavior of investors, and voters’ concerns about welfare sending by governments in the wake of globalization (for example, Sattler and Walter 2010; Walter 2008).

The second advantage of survey-response and experimental methods is that they are particularly useful for testing the microlevel causal mechanisms of macrolevel theories. For instance, a growing body of research in IPE provides theoretical predictions about how democratic and authoritarian political institutions in developing countries influence the calculations of foreign investors, and consequently foreign direct investment flows into these countries (Jensen 2003, 2006; Jensen, Biglaiser, Li, Malesky, Pinto, Pinto, and Staats 2012; Li 2006; Malesky 2009). However, an important part of the causal mechanism put forth in these studies is that domestic political institutions affect the calculations of investors and firms. These calculations determine their investment strategies. Direct tests of this individual-level and firm-level (that is microlevel) causal claim requires the use of responses to survey questions by investors and firms or survey experiments that focus on these actors as the unit of analysis. A number of scholars are already progressing in this direction by analyzing data drawn from survey respondents and survey experiments in this issue-area (Biglaiser and Staats 2007; Jensen et al. 2012).

Likewise, consider research on financial crises in IPE that statistically evaluates how electoral rules, coalition governments, divided governments, and IMF programs affect the likelihood of currency crisis (see, for example, Bernhard and Leblang 2008; Dreher and Walter 2010; Leblang and Bernhard 2000; Leblang and Satyanath 2006; Mukherjee and Bagozzi 2013). The causal framework in most of these studies of financial crisis presume that the political variables affect the currency trading behavior of currency speculators in ways that increases or decreases the likelihood of currency crises (Leblang and Satyanath 2006; Mukherjee and Bagozzi 2013). Yet these studies have not to our knowledge statistically evaluated the impact of the political variables on the trading strategies of speculators and other actors in financial markets. Therefore extant scholarship will need to turn to survey-response and experimental research to carefully test such microlevel causal arguments that explore the behavior of individual traders, stock brokers, or even the perceptions that citizens have about the effects of financial crises. An important contribution in this regard is a recent article published by Michael Bechtel, Jens Hainmueller, and Yotam Margalit (Forthcoming) that employs

9In addition to research on financial crises, IPE scholars have also examined how financial market actors respond to political information and how this in turn affects the mean and volatility of stock prices, including stock indices or the equity of firms from a specific sector (see, for example, Bechtel and Schneider 2010; Bernhard and Leblang 2006; Leblang and Mukherjee 2005). The causal claims proposed in this listed set of studies can also be evaluated via analysis of observational or experimental survey responses from financial market traders such as stock brokers and currency traders.
observational and experimental survey data to evaluate voters’ preferences in Germany over the Eurozone bailout. This article shows that social dispositions such as altruism and cosmopolitanism robustly correlate with support for the Eurozone bailouts among voters in Germany.

Third, since experimental methods allow researchers to directly evaluate causal claims drawn from insights about the behavior of individuals as well as firms, we believe that scholars who are interested in developing theories to answer substantive questions in IPE—and use experimental methods to test these theories—will be more driven to develop precise causal mechanisms with strong microfoundations to address such questions. In other words, we suggest that the feasibility of using experimental methods for statistical tests, which allows for evaluation of causal relationships at the microlevel, may in fact incentivize scholars to develop better-specified theories and claims of the microlevel mechanisms at work in each theory. It is also worth mentioning here that an added benefit of survey and experimental methods is that they can be employed to adjudicate between competing theories in a transparent manner. Survey and field experiments may also help academics understand which policies work and which do not and when such policies are most likely to be effective.

In contrast to the advantages posited earlier, methodologists and applied researchers have long debated the methodological drawbacks of especially experimental methods as, for example, low external validity, context sensitivity, and a high risk of protocol violations (Druckman, Green, Kuklinski, and Lupia 2006; King, Nielsen, Coberley, Pope, and Wells 2011; Mutz 2011). We will therefore not discuss these methodological concerns here. We instead briefly discuss two main limitations of survey and experimental research methods for IPE. The first limitation is that they cannot be applied to test some theories that answer “big” questions in IPE but that do not focus on microfoundations and microlevel causal mechanisms. For example, theories that explore how international institutions like the WTO influences trade flows, the volatility of trade flows, and dispute settlement do not explicitly rely on microlevel causal analysis to develop theoretical predictions (for example, Davis 2012; Mansfield and Reinhardt 2008; Tomz, Goldstein, and Rivers 2007). Numerous studies about the impact of domestic politics and other economic factors on exchange rate regime choice and capital account policies also do not explicitly employ specific microlevel claims for theory construction (Bearce 2002; Broz, Bernhard, and Clark 2002; Mukherjee and Singer 2010; Singer 2010). These examples suggest that it is plausible that the application of survey research and experimental methods in IPE may remain restricted to a narrow set of issue-areas.

The second limitation is the lack of generalizability of the empirical findings reported from a particular survey, field, or laboratory experiment. This limitation is not surprising, given that current research in IPE that uses survey and field experiments is by construction largely “static” in that it focuses
on how randomly selected individuals or firms respond to a certain “treatment” within one time period or, put differently, in one snapshot of time. The static within-country design of experimental research in IPE raises serious questions about whether results from such static single-country (often single-town or even locality) experiments hold (1) for other countries (lack of spatial generalizability) and (2) across time in the same country (lack of temporal generalizability). It is precisely the inability to extract generalizable results from experimental research methods that make these methods ill suited to evaluate predictions from macrolevel theories that apply to a vast set of countries over an extended time period. Whether this particular concern can be or needs to be addressed by IPE scholars who use experimental methods is a matter for both future research and debate.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THIS ISSUE

The contributions to this special issue reflect the main advantages of survey-response and experimental methods in IPE discussed earlier: evaluating the microfoundations and microlevel causal mechanisms of macrolevel theories, testing causal relationships, and providing information on the efficacy (or lack thereof) of certain policies.

To see this in more detail, consider for instance Nathan M. Jensen and Mi Jeong Shin’s (2014) article. It is well known among economists that agricultural subsidies impose deadweight losses on the economy that hurt consumer welfare (Destler 1986; Grossman and Helpman 1994). Yet consumers in advanced industrial democracies often support such subsidies. What accounts for this behavior? Jensen and Shin suggest that the ability of politicians to frame agricultural subsidies as less generous relative to subsidies provided in other countries is a critical factor that explains why domestic consumers tend to support these subsidies. Using an original survey experiment in the United States, they find that framing US agriculture as less generous than other countries generates a dramatic increase in support for increased US farm payments which, in turn, hurt the prospects for trade liberalization.

Julia Gray and Raymond P. Hicks’ (2014) article addresses an important question in the study of finance in IPE: how do international trade agreements (for example, Preferential Trade Agreements; PTAs) affect investors’ risk assessments of countries, which consequently influences their investment decisions? These two scholars suggest that investors rely on heuristics about the agreements, rather than policy reforms associated with the agreements in determining a country’s risk of default. They employ a series of innovative list experiments to assess their theoretical claims. They find support for their claims and also explore the microfoundations of investor behavior from their list-experiments.
Judith L. Goldstein and Margaret E. Peters’ (2014) article leverages a carefully designed panel-survey experiment between 2007 and 2012 in the United States that focuses on two main sources of attitudes toward immigrants: nativism and economic threat. Their panel-survey experiment generates a simple yet compelling insight that has not received sufficient attention in the growing IPE literature on individual attitudes toward immigration. Specifically, they show that while people have a baseline level of nativism, it is primarily their economic circumstance (and not merely their economic characteristics such as income) that affects their attitude toward immigration. Thus, for example, they show that individuals who suffered the most from the Great Recession hold strong anti-immigration preferences.

The article by Benjamin E. Bagozzi, Thomas Brawner, Bumba Mukherjee, and Vineeta Yadav (2014) suggests that “informed” individuals who have more knowledge of their region’s main international organization (IO)—that is, the main regional IO in which their country participates and is a member of—will be more likely to (1) employ immigration reports released by their regional IO as a cue to construct their immigration attitudes and (2) as a consequence will be more likely to support immigration. They test their prediction by using a well-known ordinal measure of support for immigration as their dependent variable. Interestingly, they find that a vast majority of “uninformed” individuals (who lack knowledge about immigration) tend to “save face” by disproportionately opting for the middle “status quo” category; this raises serious econometric challenges that cannot be addressed by conventional ordered logit and ordered probit models. Bagozzi et al. (2014) thus develop a finite mixture statistical model to address these challenges and test their claim. Results from these finite mixture models support their main hypothesis and show contra to conventional wisdom, that the effects of education and income—two core proxies for individual skill levels—have little direct effect on the immigration attitudes of respondents.

K. Amber Curtis (2014) uses an “embedded survey experiment” collected immediately after Iceland’s second “Icesave” referendum in 2011 to evaluate pocketbook concerns among voters in the aftermath of Iceland’s financial crisis. She uses this experiment to study how pocketbook concerns that result from a financial crisis drive citizens’ political attitudes. Her results reveal that subjective pocketbook concerns in the aftermath of a financial crisis exert a strong influence on the political attitudes of particularly “politically sophisticated” voters that has been ignored in previous work in this issue-area.

Finally, the commentaries by Thomas Pepinsky (2014) and Dustin Tingley (2014) review the advantages and disadvantages of using survey research and experimental methods in IPE. Pepinsky’s essay suggests that “surveys, survey experiments, individual-level data, and related microlevel research designs are an invaluable addition to the methodological toolkit of IPE.” Yet he points out that survey and experimental research in IPE rests
on just one (arguably narrow) interpretation of the role of microfoundations and methodological individualism in the construction of theories to study economic exchange in the global political economy. He also emphasizes that the field of IPE should worry that the focus on surveys and experiments will constrain not just methodological choice but also theoretical breadth. The essay by Tingley analyzes how well survey research and experimental methods have been applied to evaluate core theoretical predictions in IPE. He discusses issues of validity and methodology that arise in the design and analysis of experiments in IPE. Tingley suggests that innovative research designs associated with survey and experimental work will allow scholars to closely assess causal claims in theoretical arguments that cannot be done via cross-national or pooled data sets.

CONCLUSION: NEXT STEPS

The articles in this special issue report results obtained from conventional survey-response data sets as well as survey and field experiments that focus on an eclectic range of topics of interest to IPE scholars. From a more substantive perspective, these articles provide valuable insights on why consumers tend to support agricultural subsidies, how an economic crisis affects individual attitudes toward immigration, why microcredit organizations may not function effectively, and when pocketbook concerns that result from a financial crisis drives the political behavior of voters. Some of the articles in this issue also provide methodological contributions by, for example, introducing readers to the utility of list experiments and finite mixture statistical models for IPE.

Notwithstanding the contributions summarized, we also learn that much more needs to be done with respect to developing and employing survey-response data sets and experimental research in IPE. This raises the following question: what steps should IPE scholars adopt in the near future to ensure that survey and experimental methods provide new theoretical and empirical developments in IPE? Numerous suggestions can be put forth to answer this question. We, however, claim that it may be worthwhile for IPE scholars to invest more effort in three main areas to potentially maximize the substantive insights that can be gained from survey and experimental methods.

The first is theory development. In this regard, note that two articles in this volume sensitized us to the possibility that “issue framing” by politicians influence the behavior of voters and that “heuristics” associated with international agreements matter for investors. Factors such as issue-framing and heuristics are often overlooked by students of IPE when developing theories about the preferences and behavior of societal actors as well as key economic actors such as investors. One reason for this is because scholars traditionally subscribe to the rationalist assumption that the preferences
and choices of key actors in IPE are determined by their net utility or, in other words, the difference between the costs and benefits from taking a certain action. Yet given that heuristics and framing may matter, scholars should also focus on developing precise theoretical arguments that explain how and when issue-framing by politicians, for example, influences the economic and political choices of important societal actors. Doing so will allow us to develop more comprehensive theories about the determinants of the behavior of individuals or firms that can be carefully tested via experimental methods.

Second, we mentioned earlier that extant studies that use survey or field experiments are “static” in that they largely focus on how randomly selected individuals or firms respond to a certain “treatment” within one time period or, put differently, in one snapshot of time. Testing microlevel causal relationships via survey or field experiments that focus on one time period may be insufficient, given that the preferences and political behavior of societal actors (who are the main units of analysis in survey and experimental research) may change over time. Indeed, factors such as exogenous economic shocks that vary in intensity across time or changes in domestic political institutions (for example, electoral rules) may alter the choices and behavior of key IPE actors that may not be captured by “static” experimental methods. Thus we argue that scholars need to invest more resources and time to develop panel-survey experiments, for example—as done by Goldstein and Peters in this issue—to more carefully address the temporal dynamics discussed earlier.

Third, methodologists have made remarkable progress toward understanding precisely how poor randomization techniques, missing data, selection bias, and the use of conventional statistical (for example, logit or probit) models to analyze data obtained from survey responses or survey experiments may lead to inaccurate inferences (Gaines et al. 2007; Imai 2009; King et al. 2011). These methodologists have also refined or developed techniques to help applied researchers econometrically address some of these methodological issues. We believe that IPE scholars who employ survey and experimental research methods should use these new methodological developments to obtain more statistically robust results from their data sets.

Fourth, despite the rapid growth in particularly experimental methods in IPE, it is important to note that these methods should neither replace nor serve as a substitute for country-year statistical analyses of outcomes like trade policy, monetary and financial policies, and foreign aid. Instead experimental methods should complement country-year statistical analyses. Statistical analysis of country-year data helps researchers to obtain generalizable empirical inferences when evaluating aggregate macrolevel theories—which may be difficult to extract from experimental methods—while experiments permit scholars to test the microfoundations of these theories that cannot be achieved via country-year research designs. Thus we
hope that future research in IPE will judiciously combine qualitative analysis, country-year statistical analysis, and experimental methods to both rigorously test extant theories and potentially develop new substantive insights.

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