Abstract

Using data from the 1985 Pilot Study, Iyengar tests whether political information is best measured in a general or domain-specific context. Iyengar first examines four domain-specific information indices -- corresponding to race, the economy, foreign affairs, and group politics -- in relation to a battery of demographic and political indicators to identify the specific antecedents of information. Iyengar finds that the Pilot Study evidence yields inconclusive results. While differences associated with education, gender, and liberal identification cut across all domains, a fair number of sporadic differences are apparent among those domains, as well. Iyengar also evaluates the domain specificity and general information theories by measuring the interactive effect of issue opinions and information levels on evaluations of Reagan. While the racial information measure has a greater effect than the general information measure in the formulation of evaluations of Reagan, the economic and group politics scales perform no better than the general measure. Iyengar adds that the foreign policy information scale measures too broad a domain to constitute a test of the foreign affairs information scale. Iyengar, therefore, concludes that the domain specific information measures can be valuable, but their utility differs across issue areas.