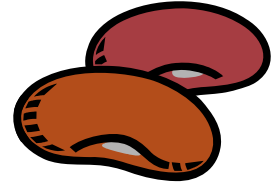


Exercise Set 4

Leader Beans



Due date: Monday, October 22. Beginning of class.

Purpose:

As with the previous assignment, this exercise is designed to stimulate thought about the various strengths and weaknesses of a given research design. The design in question here uses a case-study approach to explore the effects of leadership succession. As case studies (both single and multiple) are common in social science research, it is important to understand the power and limitations of this approach.



Assignment:

Examine Valerie Bunce's research design in the methods section of her book *Do New Leaders Make a Difference?* (in reading packet). Think about the question (puzzle) she is trying to answer and whether her research approach allows her to reach valid conclusions.

Write a 2-5 page paper that does the following: 1) provides two critiques of Bunce's methods/research design; and 2) presents a rebuttal to those critiques as if you were Bunce. You may consider a range of design topics, including case selection, equivalency of comparison, control issues, operationalization, etc.

(Helpful Hint: Before thinking about Bunce's research design specifically, think about the various ways her question could be examined. How would *you* go about answering Bunce's question? What difficulties might be anticipated in doing research into this topic? How would you deal with these problems? How does Bunce address them, if at all? What other ways are there to approach this problem? This need not be part of your written answer. However, thinking about these questions is a good warm-up for the specific exercise presented above.)

