MEASURING EMPOWERMENT

Cross-Disciplinary Perspectives

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Chapter 19

Measuring Democratic Governance: Central Tasks and Basic Problems

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National states have long had an interest in producing data on their resources and populations. The generation of statistics on a wide range of economic, military, demographic, and social issues coincided with the development and consolidation of state bureaucracies; indeed, "statistics" literally means the "science of the state." The body of state-produced data has grown steadily over the years as states have sought to track a growing number of issues and as more states have developed the capability to generate data. Moreover, as a result of the efforts of intergovernmental organizations such as the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the United Nations' multiple programs and agencies, data gathered by governments throughout the world have been brought together and used to build cross-national databases. Prominent examples, such as the World Bank's World Development Indicators and the data published in the United Nations Development Programme's *Human Development Report,* are the results of a lengthy collective effort whereby procedures to generate data have been tested, fine-tuned, and increasingly standardized.

The production of data on explicitly political matters and on the political process in particular has been a different story. The generation of data, in particular comparable data, on politics has persistently lagged behind that on other aspects of society (Rokkan 1970, 169–80; Heath and Martin 1997). Some noteworthy efforts have been made by sources independent of states, university researchers in particular, since roughly the 1960s. But it has only been quite recently, with the spread of democracy throughout the globe and the events of 1989 in the communist world, that interest in data on politics has become widespread.

The current period is without doubt unprecedented in terms of the production of data on what, for the sake of succinctness, could be labeled as democratic governance. Academic work has been given a new impulse. National development agencies, intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), multilateral development banks, and a large number of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) have launched various initiatives (Santiso 2002). The generation of comparable cross-national data on democratic governance has become a growth industry and, very rapidly, a huge number of data sets have become available.[1]

Another important change in recent years involves the uses of data on politics. Nowadays, statistical analyses on the causes and consequences of democratic governance are regularly invoked by a variety of actors to justify their support of, or opposition to, different policies. NGOs use data for purposes of advocacy and to keep government accountable. In turn, governments, IGOs, and the multilateral banks are increasingly putting emphasis on governance-related conditionalities and making decisions informed by data on democratic governance.[2] What used to be primarily an academic quest has become deeply enmeshed with politics, as data on politics have become part of the political process itself.

These developments reflect an appreciation of politics as a central aspect of society and are largely salutary. Most significantly, they offer the promise of increased knowledge about politics and the use of this knowledge to improve policy making and accountability. But they also raise some concerns. Producers of data on democratic governance usually present their data as scientific products. Even when they do not, the reception of data by the public, and to a large extent by public officials, is influenced by the special status associated with information presented in quantitative, statistical terms. Indeed, one of the selling points of data on democratic governance is that they draw on the power of an association with science. Yet this claimed or assumed scientific status verges on being a misrepresentation of the current state of knowledge regarding the measurement of democratic governance.

The fact is that we still do not have measuring instruments that have been sufficiently tested and refined, and that garner a broad consensus. Many current instruments are open to serious methodological critique and also differ, sometimes quite considerably, with regard to fundamental features (Munck and Verkuilen 2002). Data generated on supposedly the same concepts can lead to significant divergences in the way the world is described and the causes seen to affect outcomes of interest (Casper and Tufis 2002). Despite recent advances, we are still at an early, relatively exploratory phase in the measurement of democratic governance.

This chapter focuses on one key implication of this assessment of the state of knowledge: the need to develop instruments to measure democratic governance in a highly valid and reliable manner. It does not propose new instruments and does not even consider any of the available instruments in depth. Rather, it considers current attempts at measurement as a whole and discusses, first, some central tasks to be tackled in the development of measuring instruments, and second, some basic problems with measuring instruments that should be

avoided. The overall aim is to take stock of where we stand and to offer suggestions as to how future work might be oriented.

An appendix to the chapter presents a select list of data sets on democratic governance. This list shows that currently available data sets constitute a considerable resource. Recent efforts have resulted in data sets on a range of aspects of the electoral process, on governmental institutions and the decision-making process, on the rule of law, and so on. Yet the discussion of the continuing challenges regarding the construction of measuring instruments suggests the need to use these existing data sets with caution. Until measuring instruments that address the tasks and resolve the problems discussed in this chapter have been developed, the data generated with existing instruments should be used with deliberate care and prudence.

Central Tasks in the Development of Measuring Instruments

Measuring instruments are not ends in themselves but rather tools used to generate data. Thus, once established measuring instruments are available, they recede into the background and attention focuses on the data produced with these instruments. However, because we still lack instruments that can be used to measure democratic governance in a sufficiently valid and reliable manner, a focus on instruments is justified. Though existing work offers important clues as to how a suitable measuring instrument could be developed, some key issues remain to be resolved. These issues concern four central tasks in the development of measuring instruments:

1. The formulation of a systematic, logically organized definition of the *concepts* being measured
2. The identification of the *indicators* used to measure the concept
3. The construction of *scales* used to measure variation
4. The specification of the *aggregation rule* used to combine multiple measures when a composite measure or index is sought[3]

Concepts

An initial task in the process of measurement is the explicit formulation of the concepts to be measured. This involves identifying attributes that constitute the concept under consideration, and delineating the manner in which these multiple attributes relate to each other in a logical fashion and also distinguish the concept from other closely related ones. This is a task to which political philosophers, and political and social theorists, have made invaluable contributions, and certain books are such obligatory points of reference that they might be considered classics.[4] But there continues to be a lack of broad-based consensus and clarity regarding basic conceptual matters. Different authors routinely invoke different attributes in defining the same concept, specify the connection among the same attributes in various ways, and use a number of

concepts that are hard to distinguish from each other with clarity. Indeed, it is striking that the field of democratic governance includes so many idiosyncratically and vaguely defined, and unclearly differentiated, concepts: democracy, democratic consolidation, democratic quality, liberal democracy, rule of law, democratic governability, good governance, as well as democratic governance itself, the label used here to refer to the field as a whole.[5]

The stakes associated with these conceptual issues are high. Efforts at measurement take definitions of concepts as their point of departure, and much depends on whether the concept to be measured is formulated clearly and thus provides a good anchor for the data generation process. The validity of any measures will inescapably be affected by these conceptual choices. The ability to generate discriminating measures hinges on such conceptual matters,[6] as does the possibility of cumulative work by different researchers. Thus, greater attention needs to be given to the challenge of systematizing the concepts to be measured, building on insights that have been developed and refined over the years and that are likely to enjoy a substantial degree of consensus.

One promising strategy is to begin with the political regime, which concerns the mode of access to government offices, and to distinguish the regime from other aspects of the broader conceptual map encompassed by the term "democratic governance." The regime is, after all, the classic locus of democratic theory and an aspect of the broader problematic of democratic governance on which much work has been done and on which a fairly important degree of consensus has developed.[7] Beyond the regime, it is useful to introduce a broad distinction between the process whereby states make and implement legally binding decisions, which might be labeled as the governance dimension, and the outcomes and content of state decisions from the perspective of all citizens, including those that occupy a position within the state, which might be labeled as the rule of law dimension (table 19.1).

This proposal, to be sure, is tentative. Yet it drives home a key and somewhat unappreciated point: especially when the concepts of interest are broad in scope, concepts must be logically disaggregated. Indeed, unless the boundaries among closely related concepts are specified, the problem of conceptual conflation undercuts the possibility of advancing an analytic approach. Moreover, this proposal also provides a basis for beginning a focused discussion of the linkages among the central concepts used by distinct communities of scholars and practitioners who use different concepts yet are clearly grappling with the same underlying issues. Such linkages have been discussed in the context of the concepts of democracy, human rights, and human development.[8]

A conceptual linkage of particular interest in the context of measurement issues is that between democratic governance and empowerment. Empowerment has been understood as referring to "the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives" (Narayan 2002, 14). It is seen as entailing four core elements: access to information, inclusion and participation, accountability, and local organizational capacity (18–22). Clearly,

Table 19.1 The Concepts of Political Regime, Governance, and Rule of Law

Concept	*Aspect of the political process*	*Some central elements*
Political regime	Access to government offices	Elections and their competitiveness, inclusiveness, fairness, etc. Candidate selection process Electoral system
Governance	Decision making within the state	Executive-legislative relations Judiciary Federalism Bureaucracy Mechanisms of direct democracy
Rule of law	State treatment of citizens	Corruption Civil and human rights Property rights Press freedom

multiple points of overlap exist with the concepts used in the literature on democratic governance. Empowerment and democratic governance share a concern with citizens' ability to exercise control over state power, an issue seen as multidimensional. More pointedly, information, inclusion, accountability, and organization are all central to the ways in which analysts of democratic governance evaluate citizens' access to government offices and their continued involvement in decision making between elections. There are, therefore, fruitful points of convergence between the concepts that deserve to be further explored. But there are also differences, such as the greater emphasis within the empowerment framework on the ways in which material resources affect citizens' ability to effectively exercise their rights, and the attention within the democratic governance framework to the ways governments are constituted and decisions are made within the state. These differences suggest that one key challenge is to coherently weave together frameworks that have been developed with similar motivations in mind, that is, to offer an encompassing approach to the study of societies.

Indicators

A second task to be tackled in developing a measuring instrument concerns the choice of indicators, that is, the observables used to operationalize various concepts. This task has been addressed quite rigorously in discussions by academics about the measurement of democracy, democratic institutions, and human rights.[9] Other important contributions include various manuals

and handbooks prepared by NGOs, IGOs, and development agencies on broad topics such as democracy and democratic governance (USAID 1998, 2000a; Beetham et al. 2001), as well as on more specific topics such as electoral observation (NDI 1995; OSCE/ODIHR 1997), corruption (USAID 1999; see also Heidenheimer and Johnston 2002), and gender equality (OECD/ DAC 1998; ECLAC 1999; UNECE 2001; see also Apodaca 1998). Finally, this task has been addressed by a large number of conferences and many working groups that bring together academics and practitioners with representatives of various NGOs, IGOs, and development agencies (United Nations 2000).[10]

The work on indicators in recent years has produced important advances. As a result, current knowledge is considerably more sophisticated than it was some two decades ago. Nonetheless, existing indicators suffer from some problems, a central one being the failure to ensure that indicators fully tap into the meaning of the concepts being measured. In this regard, it should be noted that the common strategy of focusing on formal institutions is problematic. At the very least, the measurement of democratic governance must consider whether actors act according to the rules of formal institutions. And if actors do not channel their actions through formal rules, the behavior of these actors has to be registered in some other way. Thus it is clearly the case that such institutions are only part of what needs to be measured and that measurement cannot be reduced to a matter of formal rules. Yet overcoming this shortcoming is anything but easy, for it is quite difficult to identify indicators beyond formal institutions that capture the actual political process and are also firmly rooted in observables. Put in more technical terms, a lingering problem that affects many efforts at defining indicators is their inability to measure concepts both fully, so as to ensure content validity, and on the basis of observables, so as to guarantee replicability.

Scales

A third task to be undertaken in developing a measuring instrument is the construction of scales that spell out the level of measurement selected to measure variation. This task has direct implications for the potential use of data, whether for performing academic analysis or—as is increasingly the case—for monitoring collectively determined goals. Yet relatively little work has focused on how to think about variation in the attributes of democratic governance. Moreover, the debate that has taken place, on the choice between dichotomous and continuous measures of democracy, has generated little agreement (Collier and Adcock 1999).

The gaps in our knowledge regarding this task are indeed quite large. We need to devise ways to construct scales that capture the rich variety of intermediary possibilities in a systematic way and hence to identify multiple thresholds, to link each threshold with concrete situations or events with clear normative content, and to explicitly address the relationship among thresholds. These are all basic issues that affect the possibility of constructing meaningful scales to measure the attributes of democratic governance and should be the focus of more research.[11]

Aggregation Rule

Finally, a fourth task that is frequently relevant in constructing a measuring instrument concerns the specification of the aggregation rule used to combine multiple measures. This is not a necessary step in generating data. But there is a clear benefit to combining data on the various attributes of a concept: the creation of a summary score that synthesizes a sometimes quite large amount of data. This advantage partly explains why data generation has commonly included, as one goal, the creation of indexes. However, a satisfactory way to address this task still has not been found. Some useful guidance concerning an aggregation rule can be drawn from existing theory and indexes, but various problems persist. Most critically, attention to theory has been relatively absent. This is the case with data-driven methods, but even ostensibly theory-driven methods are presented in quite an ad hoc manner, with little justification, or they simply rely on default options. Moreover, there is little consensus concerning how disaggregate data should be aggregated into an index.[12]

More work is thus needed on the following issues. First, it is necessary to address the relationship between indicators and the concept being measured and to specify whether indicators are considered "cause" or "effect" indicators of the concept (Bollen and Lennox 1991).[13] Second, if the indicators are considered to be cause indicators, it is necessary to explicitly theorize the status of each indicator and the relationship among all indicators and to justify whether indicators should be treated as necessary conditions or whether substitutability and compensation among indicators might be envisioned (Verkuilen 2002, ch. 4). Third, more needs to be done to integrate theory and testing in the determination of an aggregation rule. These are central issues that have nonetheless rarely been addressed in a systematic manner in current efforts to develop measuring instruments.

Basic Problems with Measuring Instruments

The development of suitable measuring instruments also requires, more urgently, the avoidance of some basic problems. Such problems are not only common but also highly consequential, being found in various proposals that link data to policy choices and political conditionalities. Indeed, if the generation of data on democratic governance and the use of these data as an input in the policy process are to gain legitimacy, it will probably depend more than anything else on the concerted effort to understand and overcome these shortcomings. Thus, even though these problems are associated with the tasks discussed above, a separate discussion of five basic problems is merited.

Incomplete Measuring Instruments

Various initiatives that purport to use measures of democratic governance to monitor compliance with certain standards offer vague enunciations of principles (for example, the European Union's accession democracy clause) or

a list of items or questions (for example, the African Peer Review Mechanism of the New Partnership for Africa's Development).[14] These enunciations or lists provide some sense of which concepts are to be measured. But they are not measuring instruments, because they are silent on a broad range of issues that are required to construct a measuring instrument. And the incomplete specification of a measuring instrument opens the door to the generation of data in an ad hoc way that is susceptible to political manipulation. If data are to be used in making political decisions, it is imperative to recognize that a list of items or questions provides, at best, a point of departure, and to fully assume the responsibility of developing a measuring instrument.

Denying Methodological Choices

A standard approach to preventing the political manipulation of data is to emphasize the need for objective data, the idea being that such data are not subject to politicking. But the commonly invoked distinction between objective and subjective data (see, for example, UNDP 2002, 36–37) is frequently associated with a simplistic view of the data generation process that can actually hide significant biases. The human element cannot be removed from the measurement process, since a broad range of methodological choices necessarily go into the construction of a measuring instrument. Thus, the best that can be done is to be up-front and explicit about these methodological choices, to justify them theoretically and subject them to empirical testing, and to allow independent observers to scrutinize and contest these choices by making the entire process of measurement transparent. This is the most effective way to generate good data and to guard against the real danger: not subjective data but rather arbitrary measures that rest on claims to authority.[15]

Delinking Methodological Choices from the Concept Being Measured

If choices and hence subjectivity are an intrinsic aspect of measurement, it is critical to ensure that the multiple choices involved in the construction of measures are always made in light of the ultimate goal of the measurement exercise: the measurement of a certain concept. This is so obvious that it might appear an unnecessary warning. Yet the delinking of methodology from the concept being measured is a mistake made by such significant initiatives as the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) of the U.S. government. Indeed, while the MCA supposedly uses data as a means to identify countries that are democratic—the guiding idea being that democracies make better use of development aid and should thus be targeted—the methodology used to generate a list of target countries does not capture the concept of democracy and does not guarantee that democracies will be identified.[16] When it comes to constructing measuring instruments, and especially when methodological choices might be presented as technical in nature, it is essential to constantly link these choices explicitly and carefully back to the concept being measured.

Presenting Measurement as a Perfect Science

The results of the measurement process—quantitative data—tend to be taken, and sometimes presented, as flawless measures. But such interpretations overlook one of the central points in measurement theory: that error is an inescapable part of any attempt at measurement. This is not merely a technical issue that might be sidestepped at little cost. Nor is it a fatal flaw that implies that the resulting measures should be distrusted and, at an extreme, rejected. Rather, all this point implies is that measurement is a precise but not a perfect science, and that measurement error should be factored into an estimate of the degree of confidence that is attached to data. Yet this critical point is frequently overlooked and data are presented as though they were error-free, something that can lead to mistaken results. A prominent example of such a problem is, again, the MCA.[17] But it is not an isolated example. Therefore, efforts to construct measuring instruments and to interpret data must be forthcoming about the unavoidable nature of measurement error and must factor such error into any conclusions derived from the analysis of data.

Overcomplexification

Finally, it is not a bad thing to consider displays of technical virtuosity in measurement exercises with a degree of suspicion. To be sure, measurement involves a range of sometimes quite complex issues and these should all be given the attention they deserve. But it is also useful to emphasize that good data are readily interpretable and to warn against overcomplexification. Indeed, there are grounds to suspect that a measuring instrument that is hard to grasp reduces the accessibility and interpretability of data without necessarily adding to their validity. Numerous examples of such overcomplexification exist in the field of democratic governance and a sign of this is the real difficulty even experts face in conveying the meaning of many indexes in ways that make real, tangible sense. Thus, a good rule of thumb in constructing measuring instruments is to keep things as simple as possible.

Conclusions

The distance between science and politics has been greatly reduced as data about politics, and the analyses of those data, are increasingly used in politics and are becoming a part of the political process itself. We live in an age in which data, especially quantitative data, are widely recognized as tools for scientific analysis and social reform but are also closely intertwined with the language of power. Thus, it is only proper that social scientists assume the responsibilities associated with the new salience of data on politics by contributing to the generation of good data and by exercising scrutiny over the ways in which data, and analyses of data, on democratic governance are put to political uses.

The construction of adequate measuring instruments remains an important challenge. In this regard, it is essential to acknowledge that currently available

instruments are contributions to a fairly new and still unfolding debate about how to generate data on politics. We can only hope that this debate, which should address the tasks discussed in this chapter, will generate significant advances that will lead to broadly accepted instruments.

In the meantime, it is sensible to highlight the need for caution concerning claims about data on politics. This means, most vitally, that the basic problems with measuring instruments discussed above must be avoided. These problems could undermine the legitimacy of using data for policy purposes and solidify opposition to initiatives seeking to build bridges between science and politics. In addition, this means that currently available data sets on democratic governance, such as those included in this chapter's appendix, must be used with care. After all, inasmuch as measuring instruments remain a matter of debate, the data generated with those instruments must be considered as quite tentative and subject to revision. The exercise of caution might run against the tendency of some advocates to play up achievements in the measurement of democratic governance. But a conservative strategy, which puts a premium on avoiding the dangers of "numerological nonsense" (Rokkan 1970, 288), is the strategy most likely to ensure the continuation and maturation of current interest in data on democratic governance.

Appendix: Select List of Data Sets on Democratic Governance

The following list of data sets gives a sense of the resources that are currently available.[18] The presentation is organized in terms of the conceptual distinction between the political regime, governance, and rule of law introduced in table 19.1, distinguishing also between indexes, that is, aggregate data, and indicators, that is, disaggregate data. All these data sets take the nation-state as their unit of analysis. A final table presents some resources on subnational units.

The measurement of the concept of political regime has been a concern within academia for some time, and the generation of indexes in particular has been the subject of a fair amount of analysis (table 19.2). These indexes have tended to be minimalist, in the sense that they do not include important components such as participation. Moreover, though they tend to correlate quite highly, there is evidence that there are significant differences among them. Nonetheless, most of these indexes are firmly rooted in democratic theory and, with some important exceptions (especially the Freedom House Political Rights Index), offer disaggregate measures as well as an aggregate measure. Beyond these indexes, in recent times much effort has gone into generating measures of important elements of the democratic regime (table 19.3). In comparative terms, the measurement of the democratic regime and its various elements is more advanced than the measurement of other aspects of the political process.

The measurement of the concept of governance reveals some bright spots and some problems (tables 19.4 and 19.5). At the disaggregate level, important progress has been made and the Database on Political Institutions in particular is a valuable resource in this regard. However, we still lack a good

Table 19.2 Political Regime Indexes

Name	*Components*	*Scope*	*Source*
Freedom House's Political Rights Index	Free and fair elections for the chief executive Free and fair elections for the legislature Fair electoral process Effective power of elected officials Right to form political parties Power of opposition parties Freedom from domination by power groups (e.g., the military, foreign powers, religious hierarchies, economic oligarchies) Autonomy and self-government for cultural, ethnic, religious, or other minority group	172 countries, 1972–present	Freedom House, http://www.freedomhouse.org.
Governance Research Indicators Dataset (2002): Voice and Accountability Index	Government repression Orderly change in government Vested interests Accountability of public officials Human rights Freedom of association Civil liberties Political liberties Freedom of the press Travel restrictions Freedom of political participation Imprisonment	199 countries, 1996–2002	Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/govdata2002/index.html.

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Table 19.2 Political Regime Indexes (continued)

Name	*Components*	*Scope*	*Source*
	Government censorship Military role in politics Responsiveness of the government Democratic accountability Institutional permanence		
Political Regime Change Dataset	Competitiveness Inclusiveness Civil and political liberties	147 countries, independence–1998	Mark J. Gasiorowski, "An Overview of the Political Regime Change Dataset," *Comparative Political Studies* 29, no. 4 (1996): 469–83; and Gary Reich, "Categorizing Political Regimes: New Data for Old Problems," *Democratization* 9, no. 4 (2003): 1–24.
Political Regime Index	Contestation Offices/election executive Offices/election legislature	141 countries, 1950–2002	Adam Przeworski, Michael E. Alvarez, José Antonio Cheibub, and Fernando Limongi, *Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950–1990* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000),

			ch. 1, and pantheon.yale.edu/~jac236/Research.htm. Update by José Antonio Cheibub and Jennifer Gandhi upon request from Cheibub (jose.cheibub@yale.edu).
Political Regime Index	Free and competitive legislative elections Executive accountability to citizens Enfranchisement	All sovereign countries, 1800–1994	Carles Boix, *Democracy and Redistribution* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 98–109.
Polity IV: Democracy and Autocracy Indexes	Competitiveness of participation Regulation of participation Competitiveness of executive recruitment Openness of executive recruitment Constraints on executive	161 countries, 1800–2001	http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/polity/.
Polyarchy Dataset	Competition Participation	187 countries, 1810–2002	Tatu Vanhanen, http://www.fsd.uta.fi/english/data/catalogue/FSD1289/.

Table 19.3 Political Regime Indicators

Name of data set	*Indicators*	*Scope*	*Source*
Cross-National Indicators of Liberal Democracy, 1950–1990	Over 800 variables	Most of the world's independent countries, 1950–90	Kenneth A. Bollen, Cross-National Indicators of Liberal Democracy, 1950–1990 (computer file). 2nd ICPSR version, produced by University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1998. Distributed by Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research, Ann Arbor, MI, 2001.
Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive	Type of regime (civil, military, etc.) Type of executive Executive selection (elected or not) Parliamentary responsibility Legislative selection (elected or not) Competitiveness of nominating process for legislature Party legitimacy (party formation)	The world, 1815–1999	Arthur Banks, http://www.databanks.sitehosting.net/index.htm.
Data on Campaign Finance	Direct public financing Disclosure laws Access to free TV time Limits on spending on TV	114–43 countries, c. 2001	Michael Pinto-Duschinsky, "Financing Politics: A Global View," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 4 (2002): 69–86.
Database on Electoral Institutions	Elections under dictatorship and democracy Electoral system	199 countries, 1946 (or independence)–2000	Matt Golder, http://homepages.nyu.edu/%7Emrg217/elections.html.
Database of Electoral Systems	Type of electoral system	Entire world, present	International IDEA (Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance), http://www.idea.int/esd/data.cfm.

Database of the EPIC Project	Electoral systems Legislative framework Electoral management Boundary delimitation Voter education Voter registration Voting operations Parties and candidates Vote counting	56 countries, present	Election Process Information Collection, http://www.epicproject.org/.
Database on Political Institutions	Use of legislative election Use of executive election Method of candidate selection Fraud and intimidation in voting process Threshold required for representation Mean district magnitude Type of electoral law (proportional representation, plurality) Legislative index of political competitiveness Executive index of political competitiveness	177 countries, 1975–95	Thorsten Beck, George Clarke, Alberto Groff, Philip Keefer, and Patrick Walsh, "New Tools in Comparative Political Economy: The Database of Political Institutions," *World Bank Economic Review* 15, no. 1 (September 2001): 165–76; and http://www.worldbank.org/research/bios/pkeefer.htm.
Dataset of Suffrage	Right of suffrage	196 countries, 1950–2000	Pamela Paxton, Kenneth A. Bollen, Deborah M. Lee, and Hyojoung Kim, "A Half-Century of Suffrage: New Data and a Comparative Analysis," *Studies in Comparative International Development* 38, no. 1 (2003): 93–122; and http://www.unc.edu/~bollen/.

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Table 19.3 Political Regime Indicators (continued)

Name of data set	*Indicators*	*Scope*	*Source*
Electoral Systems Data Set	Party control over candidate nomination and order of election Pooling of votes Number and specificity of citizen votes District magnitude	158 countries, 1978–2001	Jessica S. Wallack, Alejandro Gaviria, Ugo Panizza, and Ernesto Stein, "Electoral Systems Data Set," 2003, http://www.stanford .edu/~jseddon/.
Global Database of Quotas for Women	Constitutional quota for national parliament Election law quota or regulation for national parliament Political party quota for electoral candidates Constitutional or legislative quota for subnational government	Entire world, 2003	International IDEA, http://www.idea.int/quota/index.cfm.
Global Survey of Voter Turnout	Voter turnout	171 countries, 1945–present	International IDEA, http://www.idea.int/vt/index.cfm.
Index of Malapportionment	Malapportionment	78 countries, c. 1997	David J. Samuels and Richard Snyder, "The Value of a Vote: Malapportionment in Comparative Perspective," *British Journal of Political Science* 31, no. 4 (October 2001): 651–71; and upon request from David Samuels (dsamuels@polisci.umn.edu).
Women in National Parliaments Statistical Archive	Number and percentage of seats held by women in national parliaments	181 countries, 1945–present	Inter-Parliamentary Union, Women in Parliaments 1945–1995: A World Statistical Survey (Geneva: IPU, 1995); and http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif-arc.htm.

Table 19.4 Governance Indexes

Name	*Components*	*Scope*	*Source*
Governance Research Indicators Dataset (2002): Political Stability Index	Decline in central authority Political protest Ethno-cultural and religious conflict External military intervention Military coup risk Political assassination Civil war Urban riot Armed conflict Violent demonstration Social unrest International tension Disappearances, torture Terrorism	199 countries, 1996–2002	Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/govdata2002/index.html.
Governance Research Indicators Dataset (2002): Government Effectiveness Index	Skills of civil service Efficiency of national and local bureaucracies Coordination between central and local government Formulation and implementation of policies Tax collection Timely national budget Monitoring of activities within borders National infrastructure Response to domestic economic pressures	199 countries, 1996–2002	Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/govdata2002/index.html.

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Table 19.4 Governance Indexes (continued)

Name	*Components*	*Scope*	*Source*
	Response to natural disasters Personnel turnover Quality of bureaucracy Red tape Policy continuity		
The Political Constraint Index (POLCON) Dataset	Number of independent branches of government Veto power over policy change Party composition of the executive and legislative branches Preference heterogeneity within each legislative branch	234 countries, variable dates–2001	Witold J. Henisz, http://www-management.wharton.upenn.edu/henisz/.
Public Integrity Index	Civil society, public information and media Electoral and political processes Branches of government Civil service and administration Oversight and regulatory mechanisms Anti-corruption and rule of law	25 countries, 2003	Center for Public Integrity, http://www.publicintegrity.org/ga/default.aspx.
State Failure Problem Set	Ethnic wars Revolutionary wars Genocides and politicides Adverse regime changes	96 countries, 1955–2002	State Failure Task Force, http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/stfail/sfdata.htm.
Weberian State Scale	Agencies generating economic policy Meritocratic hiring Internal promotion and career stability Salary and prestige	35 countries, 1993–96	Peter Evans and James Rauch, http://weber.ucsd.edu/~jrauch/webstate/.

Table 19.5 Governance Indicators

Name of data set	*Indicators*	*Scope*	*Source*
Country Risk Service	War Social unrest Orderly political transfers Politically motivated violence Institutional effectiveness Bureaucracy	100 countries, 1997–present	Economic Intelligence Unit, http://www.eiu.com/.
Cross-National Time-Series Data Archive	Legislative effectiveness vis-à-vis the executive Number of seats in legislature held by largest party Party fractionalization index	The world, 1815–1999	Arthur Banks, http://www.databanks.sitehosting.net/index.htm.
Database on Political Institutions	System (presidential, assembly-elected president, parliamentary) Presidential control of congress Herfindhal index of government and opposition Party fractionalization Position on right-left scale; rural, regional, nationalist, or religious basis Index of political cohesion Number of veto players Change in veto players Polarization	177 countries, 1975–95	Thorsten Beck, George Clarke, Alberto Groff, Philip Keefer, and Patrick Walsh, "New Tools in Comparative Political Economy: The Database of Political Institutions," *World Bank Economic Review* 15, no. 1 (September 2001): 165–76; and http://www.worldbank.org/research/bios/pkeefer.htm.
Executive Opinion Survey of the *Global Competitiveness Report*	Judicial independence	102 countries, 2003	World Economic Forum, http://www.weforum.org.

Table 19.6 Rule of Law Indexes

Name	*Components*	*Scope*	*Source*
Fraser Institute, Economic Freedom of the World Index	Size of government Legal structure and security of property rights Access to sound money Freedom to exchange with foreigners Regulation of credit, labor, and business	123 countries, 1970–present (every 5 years)	The Fraser Institute, http://www.freetheworld.com/download.html.
Freedom House's Civil Liberties Index	Free and independent media Free religious institutions Freedom of assembly, demonstration, and public discussion Freedom to form political parties Freedom to form organizations Independent judiciary Rule of law Protection from terror, torture, war, and insurgencies Freedom from government indifference and corruption Open and free private discussion Freedom from state control of travel, residence, employment, indoctrination Rights of private business Personal freedoms (gender equality, etc.) Equality of opportunity	172 countries, 1972–present	Freedom House, http://www.freedomhouse.org.

Freedom House's Religious Freedom in the World Survey	Religious freedom	75 countries, 2000	Paul Marshall, ed., *Religious Freedom in the World: A Global Survey of Freedom and Persecution* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2000); and Freedom House, http://www. freedomhouse.org/religion/publications/rfiw/index.htm.
Freedom House's Press Freedom Survey	Influence on the content of the news media of laws and administrative decisions Political influence over the content of news systems, including intimidation of journalists Economic influences on news content exerted by the government or private entrepreneurs	186 countries, 1993–present	Freedom House, http://www.freedomhouse.org/research/pressurvey.htm.
Governance Research Indicators Dataset (2002): Control of Corruption Index	Severity of corruption within the state Losses and costs of corruption Indirect diversion of funds	199 countries, 1996–2002	Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/govdata2002/index.html.
Governance Research Indicators Dataset (2002): Regulatory Quality Index	Export and import regulations Burden on business of regulations Unfair competitive prices Price control Discriminatory tariffs Excessive protections Government intervention in economy Regulation of foreign investment Regulation of banking Investment profile Tax effectiveness Legal framework for business	199 countries, 1996–2002	Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/govdata2002/index.html.

(table continues on following page)

Table 19.6 Rule of Law Indexes (continued)

Name	*Components*	*Scope*	*Source*
Governance Research Indicators Dataset (2002): Rule of Law Index	Legitimacy of state Adherence to rule of law Losses and costs of crime Kidnapping of foreigners Enforceability of government contracts Enforceability of private contracts Violent crime Organized crime Fairness of judicial process Speediness of judicial process Black market Property rights Independence of judiciary Law and order tradition	199 countries, 1996–2002	Daniel Kaufmann, Aart Kraay, and Massimo Mastruzzi, http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/govdata2002/index.html.

Table 19.7 Rule of Law Indicators

Name of data set	*Indicators*	*Scope*	*Source*
CIRI Human Rights Data Set	Physical integrity rights Civil liberties Workers' rights Women's rights	161 countries, 1981–present	David L. Cingranelli and David L. Richards, http://www.humanrightsdata.com.
Corruption Perceptions Index	Corruption	133 countries, 1995–present	Transparency International, http://www.transparency.org/surveys/index.html.
Country Risk Service	Government pro-business orientation Transparency/fairness (of the legal system) Corruption Crime	100 countries, 1997–present	Economic Intelligence Unit, http://www.eiu.com/.
Dataset of Labor Rights Violations	Labor rights to organize, bargain collectively, and strike	200 countries, 1981–2000	Layna Mosley and Saika Uno, "Dataset of Labor Rights Violations, 1981–2000," University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, 2002.
Executive Opinion Survey of the *Global Competitiveness Report*	Corruption	102 countries, 2003	World Economic Forum, http://www.weforum.org.
Journalists killed statistics	Violence against journalists	Entire world, 1992–present	Committee to Protect Journalists, http://www.cpj.org/killed/Ten_Year_Killed/Intro.html.

(table continues on following page)

Table 19.7 Rule of Law Indicators (continued)

Name of data set	*Indicators*	*Scope*	*Source*
Minorities at Risk	Ethno-cultural distinctiveness Group's spatial concentration Length of group's residence in country Group's presence in adjoining country Group's loss of autonomy Strength of group's cultural identity Cultural differentials Political differentials Economic differentials Demographic stress Political discrimination Economic disadvantage Cultural discrimination Identity cohesion Organizational cohesion Administrative autonomy Mobilization Orientation to conventional vs. militant strategies of action Autonomy grievances Political (non-autonomy) grievances Economic grievances Cultural grievances	267 communal groups, 1945–present	Minorities at Risk Project, http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/.

	Intra-group factional conflict Intra-communal antagonists Severity of intra-group conflict Group protest activities Anti-regime rebellion Government repression of group International contagion and diffusion Transnational support for communal groups Advantaged minorities		
Political Terror Scale	Right to life and personal integrity	153 countries, 1976–present	Political Terror Scale, http://www.unca.edu/politicalscience/faculty-staff/gibney.html.
United Nations Surveys of Crime Trends and Operations of Criminal Justice Systems	Total recorded crime incidents Criminal justice system	82 countries, 1970–2000	United Nations Criminal Justice Information Network, http://www.uncjin.org/Statistics/WCTS/wcts.html.
World Prison Brief	Prison population Pre-trial detainees/remand prisoners Occupancy level	214 countries, c. 2002	International Centre for Prison Studies, http://www.kcl.ac.uk/depsta/rel/icps/.

Table 19.8 Subnational-Level Indicators

Name of data set	*Indicators*	*Scope*	*Source*
—	Federal structure of the state	The world, 2002	Ann L. Griffiths and Karl Nerenberg, eds., *Handbook of Federal Countries: 2002* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2002).
Database on Political Institutions	Appointed or elected state/province and municipal executives Appointed or elected legislatures Autonomous or self-governing regions, areas, or districts State or provincial authority over taxing, spending, or legislating	177 countries, 1975–95	Thorsten Beck, George Clarke, Alberto Groff, Philip Keefer, and Patrick Walsh, "New Tools in Comparative Political Economy: The Database of Political Institutions," *World Bank Economic Review* 15, no. 1 (September 2001): 165–76; and http://www.worldbank.org/research/bios/pkeefer.htm.
IMF's Government Finance Statistics	Number of tiers or units of administration (state/province/region/department; municipality, city/town) Number of jurisdictions	The world, 2001	International Monetary Fund, *Government Finance Statistics Manual 2001* (Washington, DC: IMF, 2001).
World Bank Database of Fiscal Decentralization Indicators	Subnational expenditure share of national expenditures Subnational revenue share of national revenues Intergovernmental transfers as a share of subnational expenditures	149 countries, 1972–2000	World Bank, Public Sector Governance, Decentralization and Subnational Regional Economics, http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/decentralization/data.htm.

index. Some indexes, such as the Weberian State Scale, focus on only one element of democratic governance and their scope is quite limited. Others, such as the Political Constraint Index, do not touch upon the implementation aspect although they address the policy-making process in fairly broad terms. Finally, those indexes that do address policy implementation tend to combine such a large number of indicators, which tap into a range of very diverse phenomena, that they are hard to interpret.

Significant advances and lingering problems can be identified with regard to the measurement of the concept of rule of law (tables 19.6 and 19.7). We have indicators on corruption (though they are based on the perceptions of a small group of people), human rights, labor rights, and other civil rights. Moreover, various indexes have been proposed. But many of these indexes either fail to offer disaggregate data (the problem with the Freedom House Civil Rights Index), combine components of a diverse set of concepts, or focus overwhelmingly on business and property rights to the exclusion of other groups and rights.

Finally, it is necessary to identify a significant gap in most data sets. The majority of available data sets have focused squarely on the national state as the unit of analysis and have overlooked subnational levels of government. This gap is gradually being filled by recent work on decentralization and local government (table 19.8). Nonetheless, further work is needed to develop adequate data on local and community levels of government.

Notes

In preparing this chapter, I have benefited from comments by Marianne Camerer, Deepa Narayan, Saika Uno, Jay Verkuilen, and two anonymous reviewers.

1. Recent efforts to survey the field of data on democratic governance include Foweraker and Krznaric (2000), Knack and Manning (2000), Malik (2002), Munck and Verkuilen (2002), Berg-Schlosser (2003), Besançon (2003), Landman and Häusermann (2003), and Lauth (2003).
2. For a discussion of governance-related conditionalities, see Kapur and Webb (2000), Kapur (2001), Santiso (2001), Crawford (2003).
3. For an expanded discussion of these and other tasks that must be addressed in developing a measuring instrument, see Munck and Verkuilen (2002).
4. Examples include Schumpeter (1942), Marshall (1965), Dahl (1971, 1989), and Sartori (1976, 1987).
5. On the problems with current uses of the terms "democracy," "democratic consolidation," and "democratic quality," see Munck (2001, 123–30).
6. It may not be feasible to develop indicators that are uniquely linked with one concept or one attribute of a concept, a fact that complicates the effort at measurement. But in all instances the process of measurement should begin with clearly differentiated concepts (Bollen 2001, 7283, 7285).
7. O'Donnell (2001, 2004) has emphasized the value of this strategy. For an analysis of the concept of political regime, see Munck (1996). On the emerging consensus regarding the core aspects of a democratic regime, due in large part to the influence of Dahl, see Munck and Verkuilen (2002, 9–12).

8. On the links between democracy, human development, and human rights, see Sen (1999), Sano (2000), Fukuda-Parr and Kumar (2002), Langlois (2003), and O'Donnell (2004).
9. On democracy and democratic institutions, see Lijphart (1984, 1999), Inkeles (1991), Shugart and Carey (1992), Beetham (1994), Collier and Levitsky (1997), and Munck and Verkuilen (2002). On human rights, see Nanda, Scarritt, and Shepherd (1981), Jabine and Claude (1992), Cingranelli (1998), Green (2001), and Landman (2004).
10. Though most of the discussion has focused on the national level, there are also some noteworthy attempts to identify potential indicators at the subnational level. See USAID (2000b), Sisk (2001), Soós (2001), and Treisman (2002).
11. Munck and Verkuilen (2003) present some thoughts on this issue.
12. For examples of different aggregation rules, see Munck and Verkuilen (2002, 10, 25–27).
13. A cause indicator is seen as influencing the concept being measured; an effect indicator is one in which the concept being measured is seen as driving or generating the indicators. Of course, a third possibility is that indicators are both a cause and an effect of the concept being measured.
14. The European Union (EU) formally stipulated its political conditions for accession in two separate texts: the "political criteria" established by the European Council in Copenhagen in 1993, and Article 49 of the Treaty on European Union of November 1993. These documents refer to the need to guarantee "democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities," but do not offer definitions of these broad concepts, let alone the indicators that would be used to measure these concepts and the level of fulfillment of each indicator. The political conditionality of the EU acquired substance in a series of annual reports published after 1997 evaluating the progress of countries that were candidates for accession to the EU. Yet it was done in a way that denied candidate countries a clear sense of the standards to be met and presented these countries with a moving target. On the African Peer Review Mechanism's list of indicators and the process for evaluating countries it envisions, see NEPAD (2003a, 2003b).
15. A more complex question concerns the possibility that political actors that are being monitored may themselves take actions to alter the measures of interest. On data and strategic behavior, see Herrera and Kapur (2002).
16. One problem is that the MCA's rule of aggregation consists of a relative rather than an absolute criterion. Specifically, countries are assessed in terms of the number of indicators on which they rank above the median in relation to a delimited universe of cases (Millennium Challenge Corporation 2004). Thus, during periods when more than half the world has authoritarian regimes—a pattern that has dominated world history until very recently—this rule would lead to the identification of authoritarian countries as targets of aid.
17. Even though the creators of data sets used by the MCA to identify countries that are to receive development aid have provided estimates of measurement error and emphasized their importance (Kaufmann, Kraay, and Mastruzzi 2003, 23–27), this program does not incorporate estimates of measurement error in its methodology and thus potentially misclassifies countries.
18. The list is a partial one and includes neither regional data sets nor public opinion surveys such as the regional barometers (see http://www.globalbarometer.org). For a discussion of survey-based data, see Landman and Häusermann (2003). For a useful Web site that offers links to many of the data sets listed below and that is frequently

updated, consult the World Bank Institute's "Governance Data: Web-Interactive Inventory of Datasets and Empirical Tools," at http://www.worldbank.org/wbi/governance/govdatasets/index.html.

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