

PLS 210
Political Science
Research Methods

Week 5:
Cases and observations

Recap

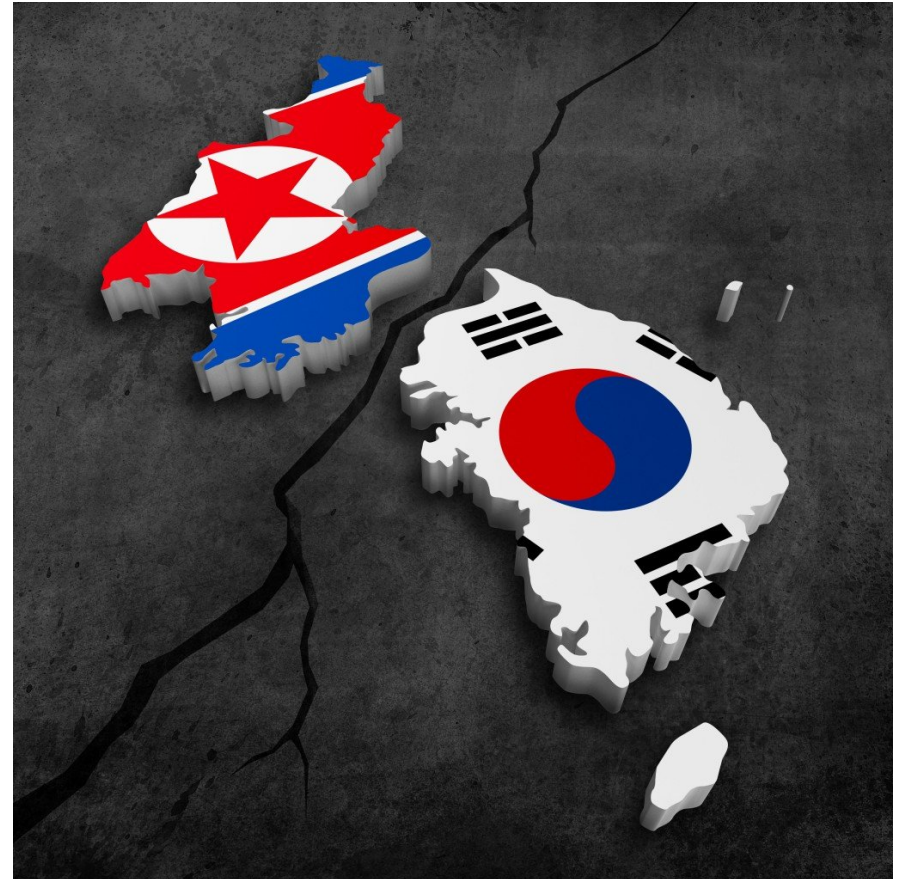
- Literature
- Research questions
- Theories and hypotheses
- Concepts and variables
- Empirical testing:
 - Operationalization
 - ...

Plan for this week

- Cases and case selection
- Observations
- Qualitative and quantitative research

Cases

- Definition:
 - Units or instances of a phenomenon of interest
- Units and levels of analysis
- Cases and the universe of cases (=population)
- Small-N and large-N



Case selection

- Atheoretical
- The universe of cases
- Pragmatic
- Random
- Purposive

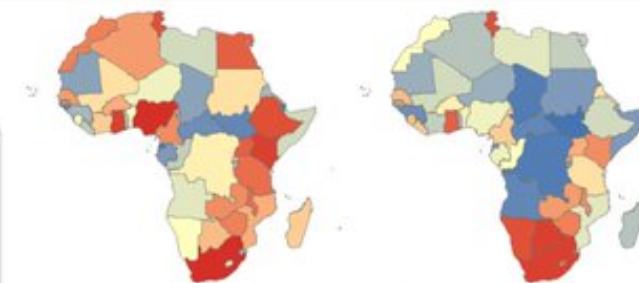


Figure 1: Total (left) and Per Capita (right) Research Articles

Notes: Maps are color-coded by quantiles (27 with 2 countries in each) and represent the tally of articles from all 1,980 EconLit journals. The color scale ranges from dark blue for the lowest tally to dark red for the highest tally. The per capita tally is calculated using average annual population data for 2000-2019.

Table 7: Correlation of Research with Cost Variables

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)
Data availability	8.20*** (1.81)					3.22 (2.04)
Ease of Doing Business		0.0702*** (0.00963)				0.00600 (0.0110)
Global Peace Index			-1.61*** (0.280)			-0.606** (0.255)
Int'l arrivals (log)				0.592*** (0.0737)		0.290*** (0.0858)
English					1.05*** (0.264)	0.611*** (0.165)
Population (log)	0.875*** (0.0752)	0.669*** (0.100)	1.04*** (0.0957)	0.529*** (0.0620)	0.842*** (0.0841)	0.694*** (0.0687)
Constant	-12.31*** (1.41)	-10.03*** (1.57)	-7.90*** (1.59)	-10.89*** (1.25)	-8.85*** (1.39)	-10.66*** (1.06)
Observations	54	54	50	53	54	49
Adjusted R ²	0.80	0.74	0.73	0.85	0.69	0.92

Notes: The dependent variable is the log of the number of articles (tally). Robust standard errors in parentheses. *Significant at 10%, **Significant at 5%, ***Significant at 1%.

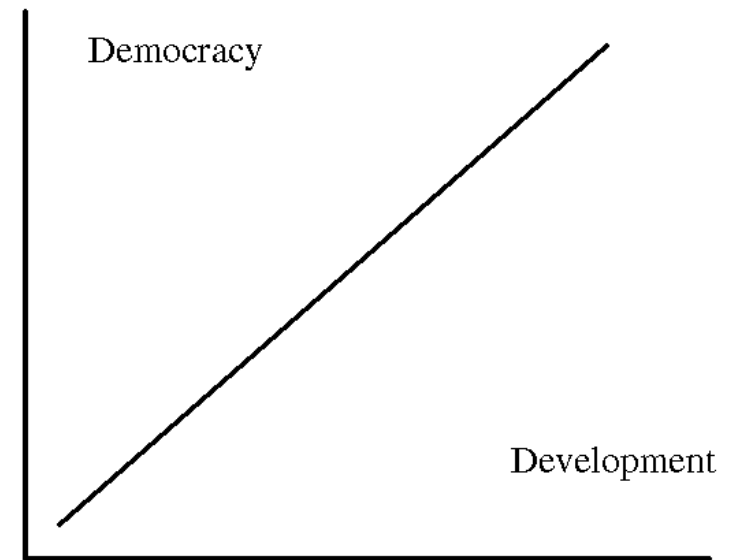
Porteous, Obie. 2020. *Research Deserts and Oases: Evidence from 27 Thousand Economics Journal Articles on Africa*.

Purposive case selection strategies

- Typical
- Diverse
- Extreme
- Deviant
- Influential
- Most different systems design (=method of agreement)
- Most similar systems design (=method of difference)



The Correlation between Development and Democracy



Positive linear correlation
between development and democracy

Case selection in practice: conflict resolution in Kenya

- Most similar systems design with four cases:
 - Wajir, Tana River, Kerio Valley, and Mandera in Kenya
- Independent variables:
 - Government bias (main variable of interest)
 - Also conflict issues and intensity, customary practices, legitimacy, ethnoreligious distance, group livelihoods, administrative divisions
- Dependent variable:
 - Peace agreement
- Observations / data:
 - Interviews, government and NGO reports, news stories

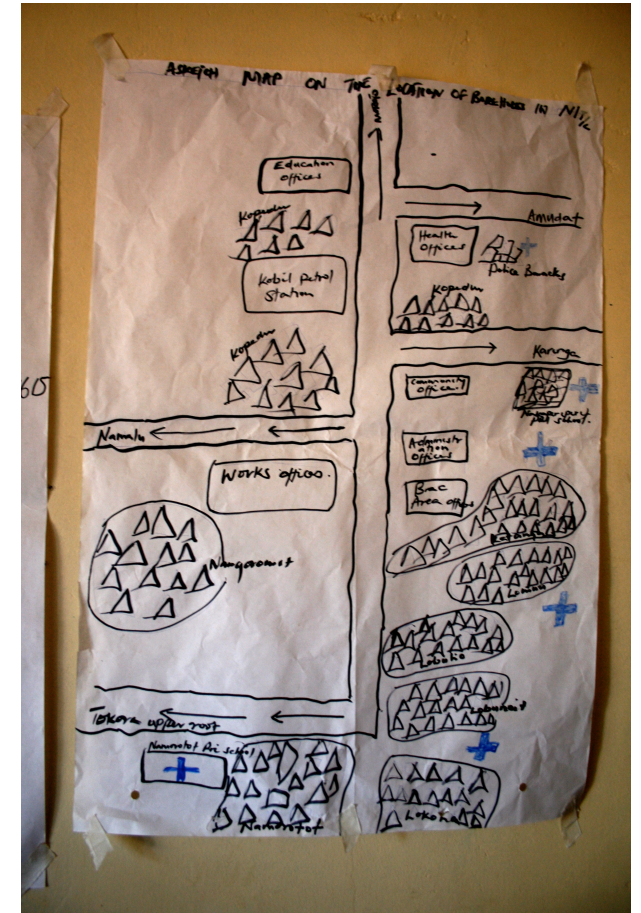


Observations

- Units of data collected for research projects



Age	
	67
	50
	46
	32
	53
	29
	36
	35



Qualitative and quantitative research

- Number of observations
- Analysis:
 - Methods
 - Thick vs. thin
- *Level of measurement*



The journey so far...

- Literature —>
- Research questions —>
- Theories and hypotheses:
 - Concepts and variables —>
- Case selection —>
- Observation and data collection —>
- *Measurement and description* —>
- ...