Concept Tree and Operationalisation of the Democracy Matrix

Contents

1. Stringent Differentiation of the Matrix Fields

Whereas the dimensions, institutions and core characteristics of the matrix fields were defined in the section on its conception, here, in accordance with a top-down perspective, a differentiation of the matrix fields into components and sub-components as **concept tree** is undertaken. The latter has to exhibit a strict vertical ordering of the different components per their degree of abstraction, in order to prevent overlaps and redundancies. In addition, the operationalisation of the individual components by way of the selection of valid **indicators** from the Varieties of Democracy dataset is presented. The aggregation rules applied, which lead to the depiction of the individual components and, ultimately, of the matrix field, are also apparent here. Moreover, the latter are justified from the point of view of democracy theory. The aggregation rules themselves – and hence the bottom-up perspective – are discussed in detail in the aggregation section.

Fig. 1: Concept Tree Example
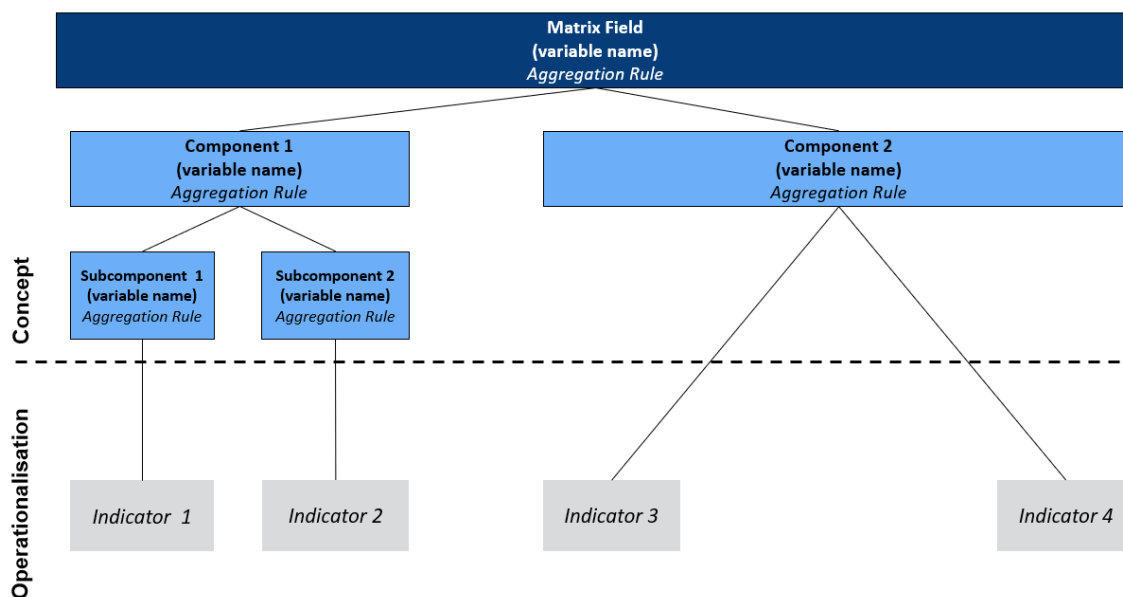
source: own presentation

2. Varieties of Democracy as Data Basis for the Democracy Matrix

The democracy matrix is related to the **Varieties of Democracy Project,**, from whose dataset it selects relevant indicators. The Varieties-of-Democracy Project is a procedure for data collection that moves into completely new and hitherto non-existent dimensions. The collected data, which was made publicly available in 2016 and has been updated yearly since then, offers over 400 key indicators for determining democracy quality, covering a time period from 1900 to 2019 (as of July 2020) and including approximately 200 countries. The data is collected according to an elaborate procedure and is subject to statistical tests to increase the reliability and validity of the assessments. Thus, over 2500 experts worldwide participate in the process, whereby, as a sort of quality assurance, care is taken that at least five experts per country encode each indicator independently of one another. In the end, with the help of the statistical procedure, measurement errors can be corrected. Only those variables that validly measure the individual matrix fields are chosen for the democracy matrix.

3. References

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