Codebook

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Overview of project:

The goal of the Political Instability Task Force (PITF) is to create a dataset that can be used to understand worldwide atrocities. The project was created by Philip Schrodt and Jay Ulfelder from the University of Kansas in order to develop quantitative and statistical modeling to understand what countries may be more prone to atrocities. The data collected information from atrocities from 1995 to 2012 from around the world. It contains information regarding the country in which the atrocity occurred, when the atrocity started and stopped, who the victims and perpetrators were, a description of the event, and more.

The project is funded by the Central Intelligence Agency, but does not reflect the views of the U.S Government.

Methodology:

The project collected information about atrocities from news sources such as Reuters, CNN, the New York Times, and the Associated Press and by using key search strings. Data are updated monthly.

Variables:

Event Type

Name: Event

Variable Type: character

Description: Atrocities are categorized into two groups: campaigns or incidents. Campaigns are atrocities that are committed over multiple days, while incidents are atrocities that have been committed over a 24 hour period.

Country

Name: Country

Variable Type: Character

Description: Country in which the atrocity occurred. The name of the country is shortened to a three letter abbreviation.

Start Day

Name: Start_Day

Variable Type: Numeric

Description: The day of the month in which the violence started.

Month

Name: Start_Month

Variable Type: Factor

Description: The month in which the violence started.

Year

Name: Start_Year

Variable Type: Numeric

Description: The year in which the violence started.

End Day

Name: End_Day

Variable Type: Numeric

Description: The day of the month where the violence ended.

End Month

Name: End_Month

Variable Type: Factor

Description: The month where the violence ended.

End Year

Name: End_Year Variable Type: Numeric Description: The year in which the atrocity ended.

Types of weapons used

Name: Weapons

Variable Type: Factor

Description: The type of weapon used to commit the atrocity. The weapons are listed in ascending order of lethality: Primitive Weapons, Firearms, Explosives, Suicide Bombing, Heavy Weapons, WMDs, Unclear/Other

Number of Deaths

Name: Deaths

Variable Type: Numeric

Description: Number of deaths in the atrocity that occurred.

Number of Injured

Name: Injured

Variable Type: Numeric

Description: The number of people injured in the atrocity.

Victim Identity

Name: Victim_Identity_Pol

Variable Type: Character

Description: Whether the victim was a member of a political party or organization.

Name: Victim_Identity_ENC

Variable Type: Character

Description: Whether the victim was a part of an ethnic, national, or citizenship group.

Name: Victim_Identity_Soc

Variable Type: Character

Description: Whether the victim was a part of a socio-economic group

Name: Victim_Identity_Rel

Variable Type: Character

Description: Whether the victim was a religious figure or part of a religious group.

Type of violence

Name: Method

Variable Type: Factor

Description: The method in which the violence was carried out. The types of violence are divided into the following categories: Attack/Massacre, Riot/Pogrom, Protest, Clash, or Other.

Event Description

Name: Description

Variable Type: Character

Description: Description of the atrocity.

Sources

Name: Primary_Source

Variable Type: Factor?

Description: The primary source(s) where the researchers received information on the atrocity. The primary sources used in this project were: Reuters, Agence-France Presse, Associated Press, Christian Science Monitor, New York Times, and the International Court for the Former Yugoslavia.