

PSC 202

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

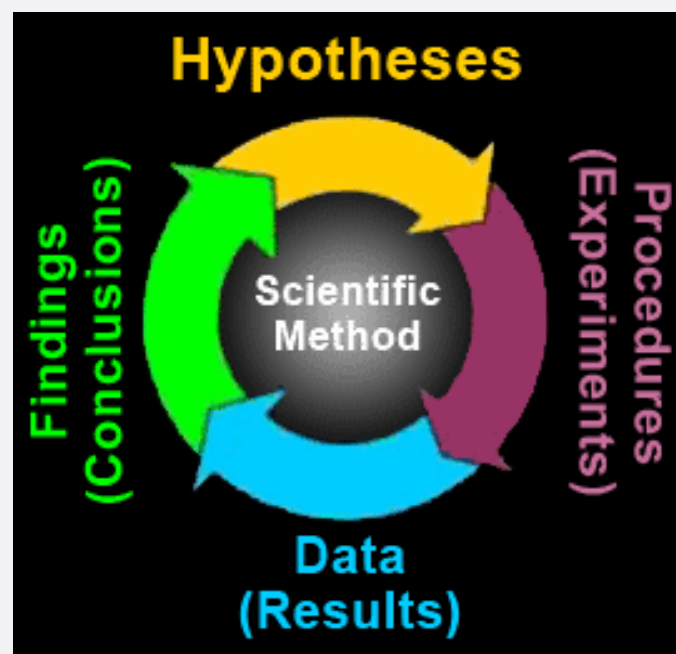
INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL ANALYSIS CONCEPTS AND MEASUREMENTS

HOUSEKEEPING

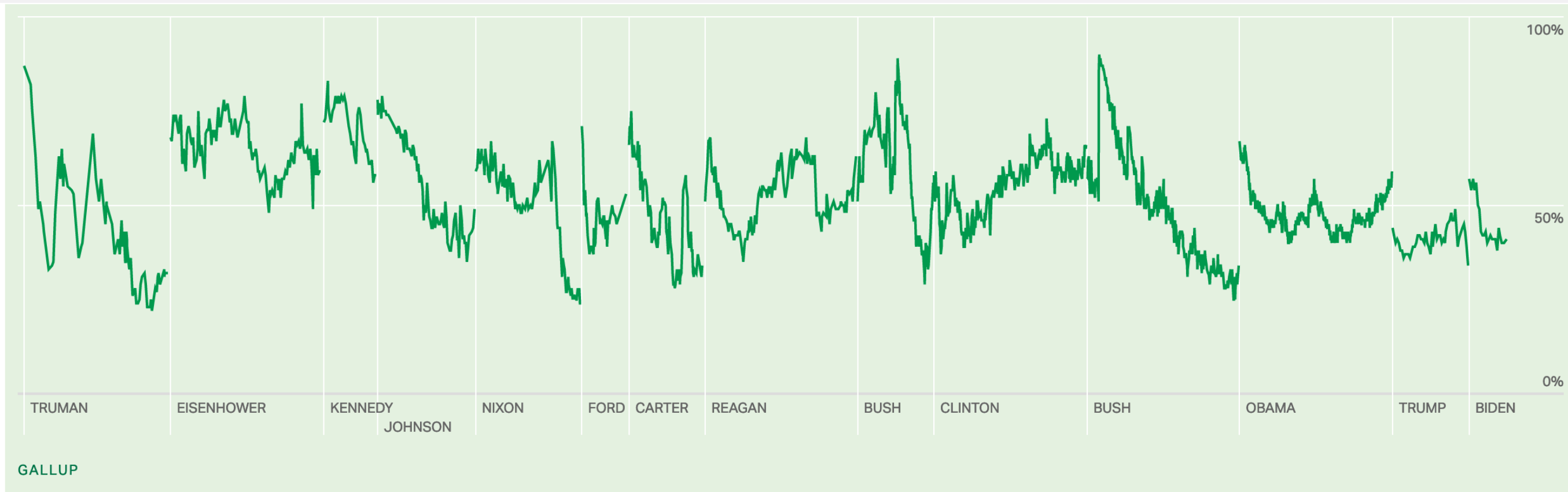
- **First problem set due on Friday**
- **Second problem set will be posted tomorrow**
- **Another reading quiz due Monday**

RECAP

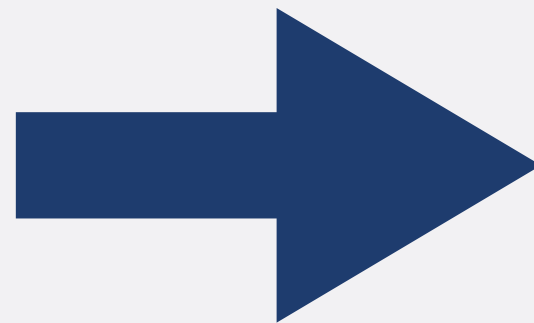
- Formulate research question
- Propose explanation/theory, hypotheses
- Data collection process
- Use data to evaluate hypotheses
- Reassess explanation



RECAP



**Performance of
economy**



**Presidential
Approval Rating**

- **What is the effect of economic performance on Presidential approval rating?**

RECAP

- **Good theory**
 - **clarifies causal relationship between what does the explaining and what is to be explained**
 - **concretely specifies the concepts it invokes**

GOOD THEORIES

- ***Good theory is falsifiable***
 - Falsifiable = can be proven wrong
 - Falsifiable \neq false: We don't aim to create theories that *are* false, but theories that *can potentially shown to be* false
 - "What evidence do I have to observe so I would conclude that a theory is wrong?"
 - If no answer to that, the theory is not falsifiable

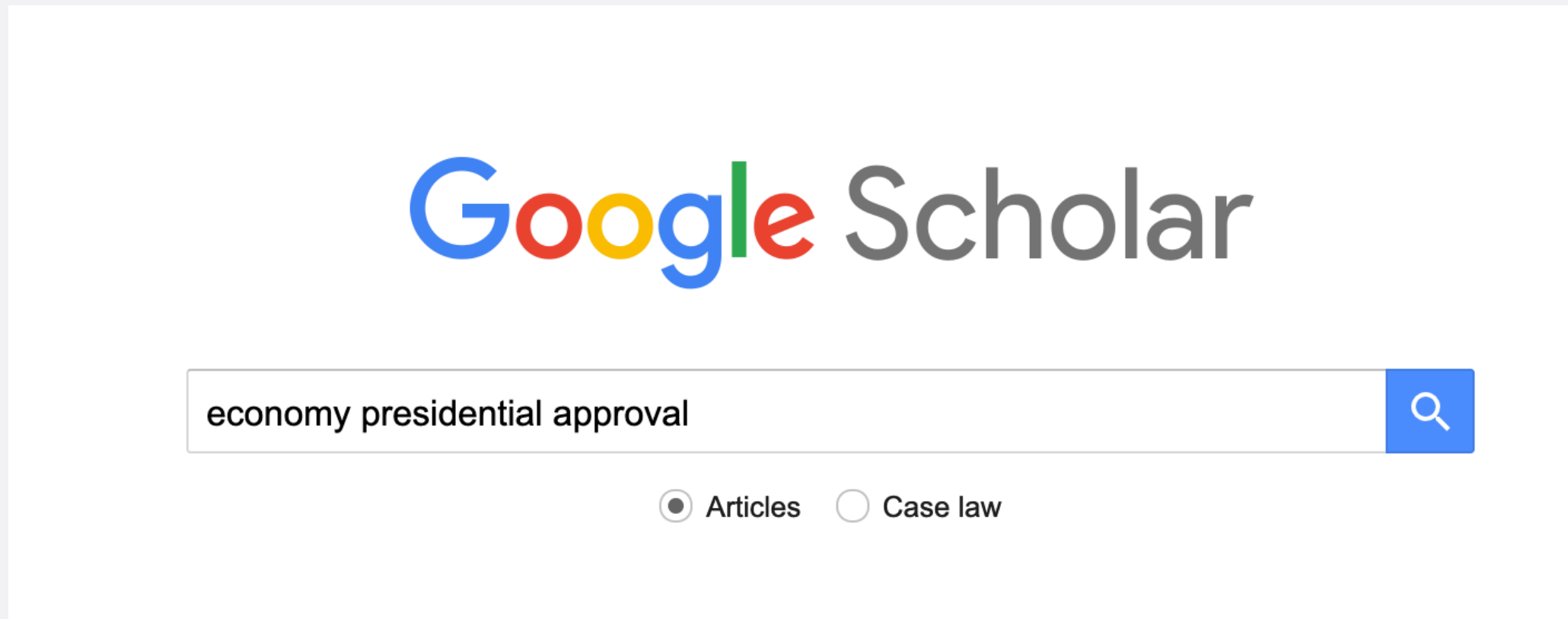
GOOD THEORIES

- **Non-falsifiable theory: "The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq prevented terrorist attacks in the United States"**
- **Falsifiable theory: "Military invasions of states harboring terrorists reduce subsequent terrorist attacks"**

GOOD THEORIES

- ***Good theory builds on existing theory***
 - **Grounded in prior literature**
 - **Your theory needs to be consistent with what prior literature has already shown to be true**

BUT HOW?



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BUT HOW?

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economy presidential approval



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[M Berlemann](#), [S Enkelmann](#) - European Journal of Political **Economy**, 2014 - Elsevier

... and inflation on **presidential** popularity, the others do not. Additional **economic** issues have

... and inflation to have a robust effect on **presidential approval**, this holds not true for shorter ...

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The international **economy** and **presidential approval**

[BC Burden](#), [A Mughan](#) - Public Opinion Quarterly, 2003 - academic.oup.com

... We start by presenting what may be considered a standard, or baseline, **presidential approval**

model to which measures of the international **economy** will later be added. This baseline ...

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Elite **economic** forecasts, **economic** news, mass **economic** judgments, and **presidential approval**

[R Nadeau](#), [RG Niemi](#), [DP Fan...](#) - The Journal of ..., 1999 - journals.uchicago.edu

... **economic** experts flow through the news media to the mass public, then influencing **presidential**

approval. ... print media, and the electorate's **presidential approval** ratings, we evaluate the ...

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Prospections, retrospections, and rationality: The "bankers" model of **presidential approval** reconsidered

[HD Clarke](#), [MC Stewart](#) - American Journal of Political Science, 1994 - JSTOR

... on the political **economy** of **presidential approval**. But to ... models of **presidential approval** and

economic evaluations ... and analysis of several **presidential approval** models similar to theirs...

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The economic determinants of U.S. presidential approval: A survey

Michael Berlemann^{a,b,*}, Sören Enkelmann^c

^a Department of Economics & Social Sciences, Helmut-Schmidt-University Hamburg, Holstenhofweg 85, 22043 Hamburg, Germany

^b CESifo, Munich, Germany

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A B S T R A C T

Even after four decades of research it remains unclear, whether presidential popularity depends on the state of the economy. While about half of all studies for the United States find a significant effect of unemployment and inflation on presidential popularity, the others do not. Additional economic issues have rarely been studied. In this survey article we study the likely causes for the inconclusive findings. While various factors have an influence on the results, especially the choice of the sample period is of crucial importance. While in the very long run we find unemployment and inflation to have a robust effect on presidential approval, this holds not true for shorter sub-periods. This result might indicate that the popularity function is instable over time. However, the findings might also be taken as an indication that the most often employed linear estimation approach is inadequate. Further research on these issues is necessary.

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- Chappell Jr., H.W., 1995. Presidential popularity and macroeconomic performance: A unified approach. *Rev. Econ. Stat.* 77, 123–137.

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The economic situation of the post-epidemic is facing huge downward risks, and the government actively introduces stimulus measures to improve the current economic ...

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Sören Enkelmann

Bundesministerium für Wirtschaft und Energie

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The economic determinants of US presidential approval: A survey M Berlemann, S Enkelmann European Journal of Political Economy 36, 41-54	88	2014
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Unraveling the relationship between presidential approval and the economy: A multidimensional semiparametric approach M Berlemann, S Enkelmann, T Kühlenkasper Journal of Applied Econometrics 30 (3), 468-486	22	2015

GOOD THEORIES

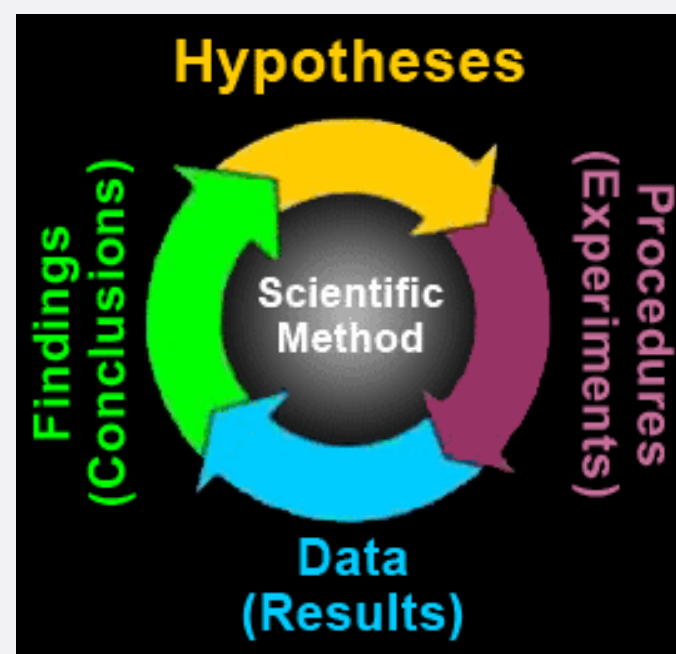
- ***Good theory leads to testable hypotheses***
 - **Specifies what we would expect to observe *in our data* if the theory is an accurate generalization about how the world works**
 - **Will discuss this in detail in a couple of weeks**

SUMMARY

- **Good theory**
 - clarifies causal relationship between what does the explaining and what is to be explained
 - concretely specifies the concepts it invokes
 - is falsifiable
 - builds on existing theory
 - leads to testable hypotheses

TODAY

- Formulate research question
- Propose explanation/theory, hypotheses
- Data collection process
- Use data to evaluate hypotheses
- Reassess explanation



TODAY

How Stable Are Democracies? 'Warning Signs Are Flashing Red'

Across the Globe, a Growing Disillusionment With Democracy

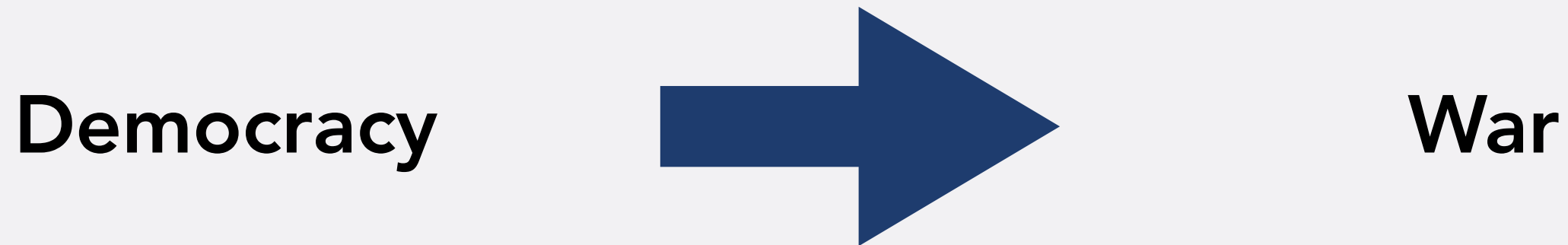
Yes, people really are turning away from democracy

No, people really aren't turning away from democracy

TODAY

- **When is a country a democracy?**
- **How can we measure this?**

EXAMPLE THEORY



- **“Democratic peace theory”**: Democracies are less likely to fight wars against each other than non-democracies

TODAY

- Countries are more or less democratic
- Want to study this empirically
 - “I know it when I see it” definition is not enough
- Democracy is a *concept*, we need to measure it
 - What does it mean to be more or less democratic?
 - How can we measure it?
 - What can go wrong in measuring it?

TODAY

- Concepts
- **Measurement Process**
- **Measurement Issues**

CONCEPTS

- **Mental constructs to represent real-world phenomena**
 - **Names for ideas, things, and feelings**
- **Identifying the relationship between concepts is at the core of social science**
 - **Need to have a clear definition of the concept**
 - **Then: How can we measure the concept in the real world?**

OTHER CONCEPTS

How Liberal Colleges Breed
Conservative Firebrands

Conservatives and Health Care

Liberals and Soda Taxes

**Liberals and conservatives even
have their own dating apps**

**Study: Liberals and conservatives sniff
out like-minded mates by body odor**

OTHER CONCEPTS

Brazilian Corruption Case Ensnarers Ex-Presidents da Silva and Rousseff

**Brazil's Federal Police Accuse
President Temer of Corruption**

Corruption Battle Roils Ukraine

OTHER CONCEPTS

Florida Law Aims To Protect Religious Expression In Public Schools

America's Changing Religious Identity

More than half in UK are non-religious, suggests survey

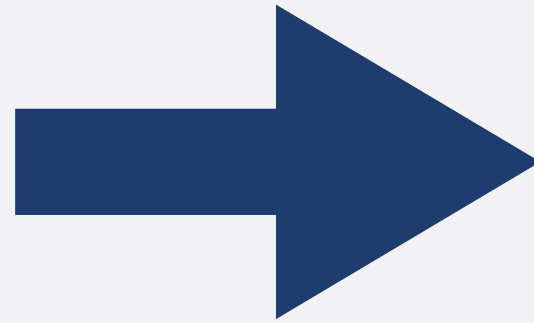
Religion is on the decline – yet our society is underpinned by faith

One in three scientists are religious

More Americans now say they're spiritual but not religious

THEORY

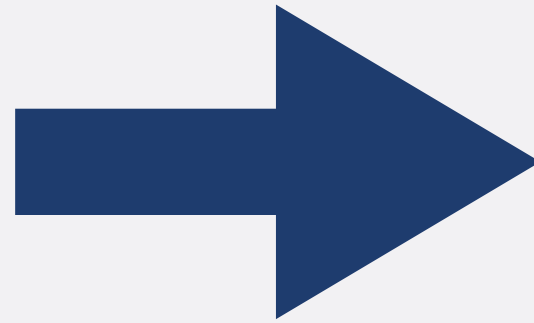
Independent variable
(concept)



Dependent variable
(concept)

THEORY

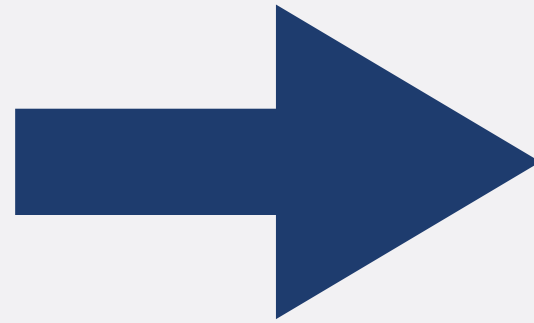
Democracy
(concept)



War
(concept)

THEORY

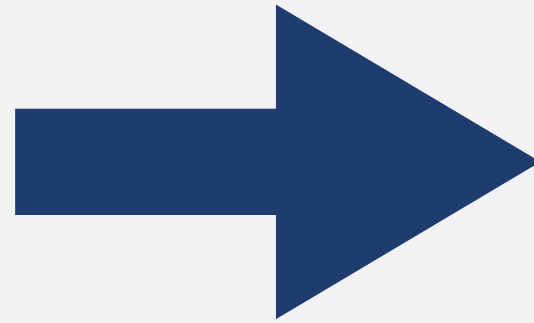
Independent variable
(concept)



Dependent variable
(concept)

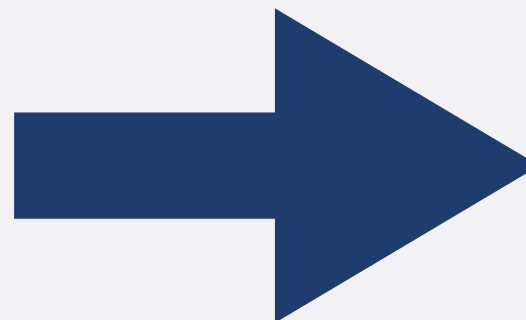
MEASUREMENT

Independent variable
(concept)



Dependent variable
(concept)

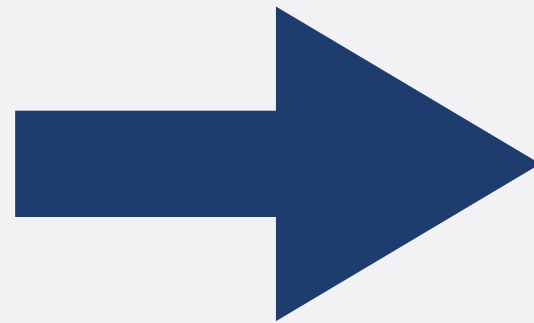
Independent variable
(measured)



Dependent variable
(measured)

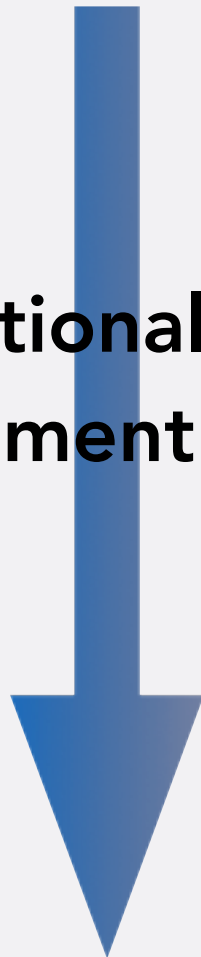
MEASUREMENT

Independent variable
(concept)

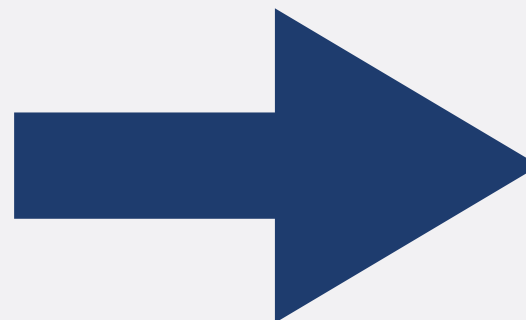


Dependent variable
(concept)

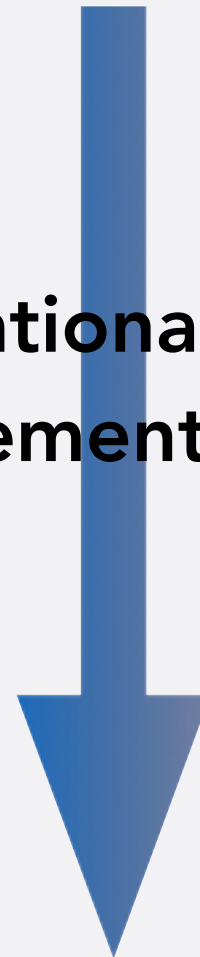
(Operationalization,
measurement process)



Independent variable
(measured)

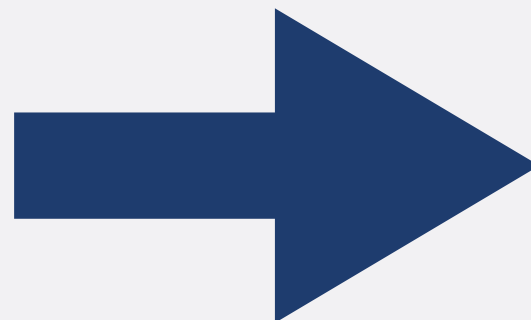
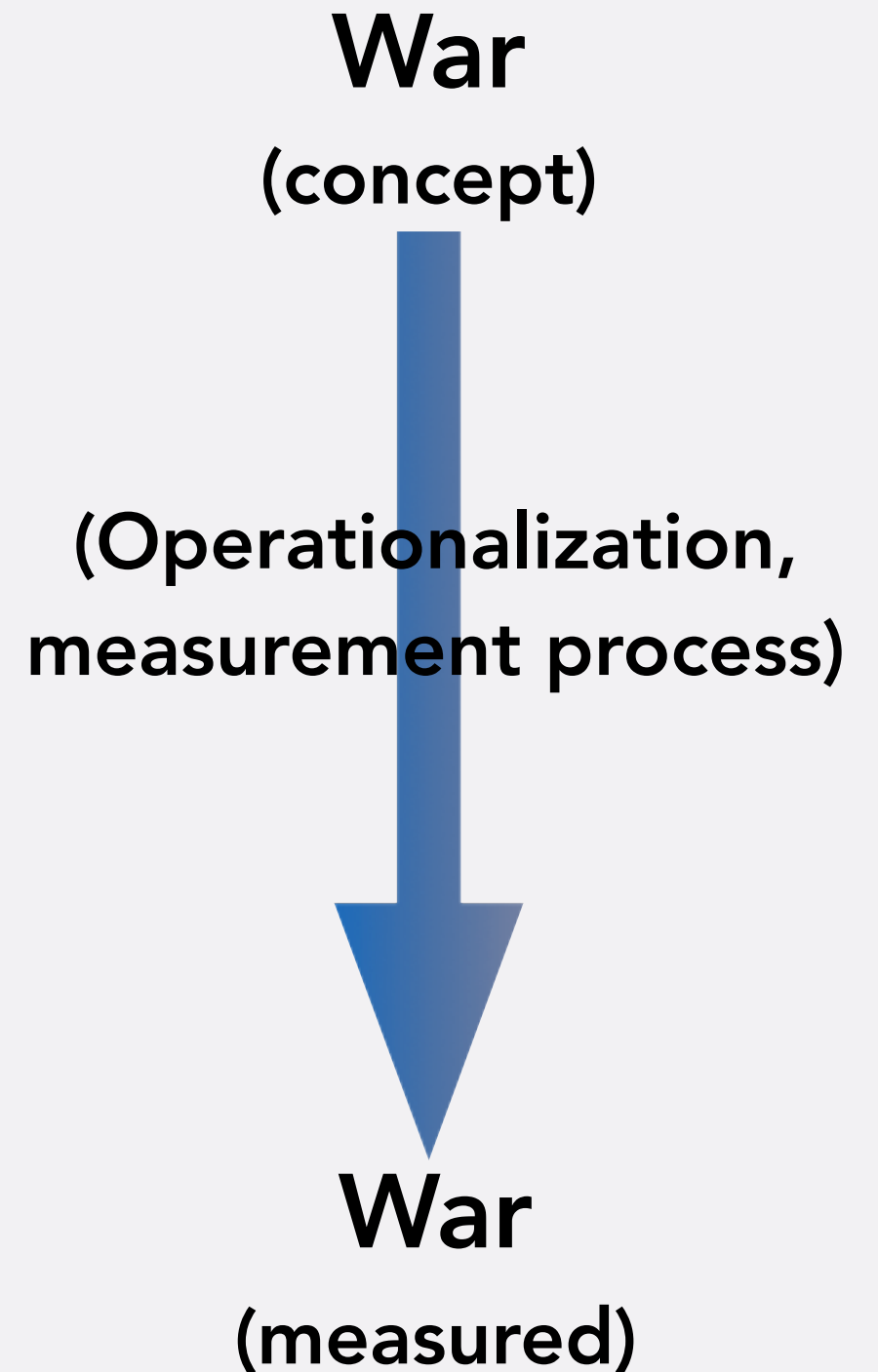
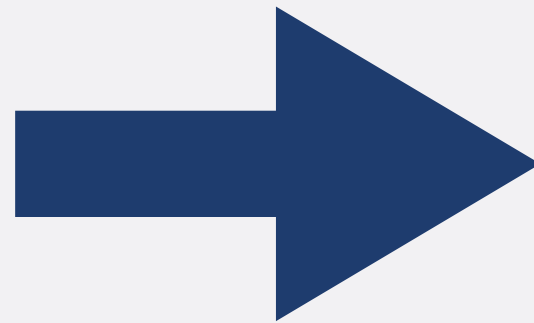
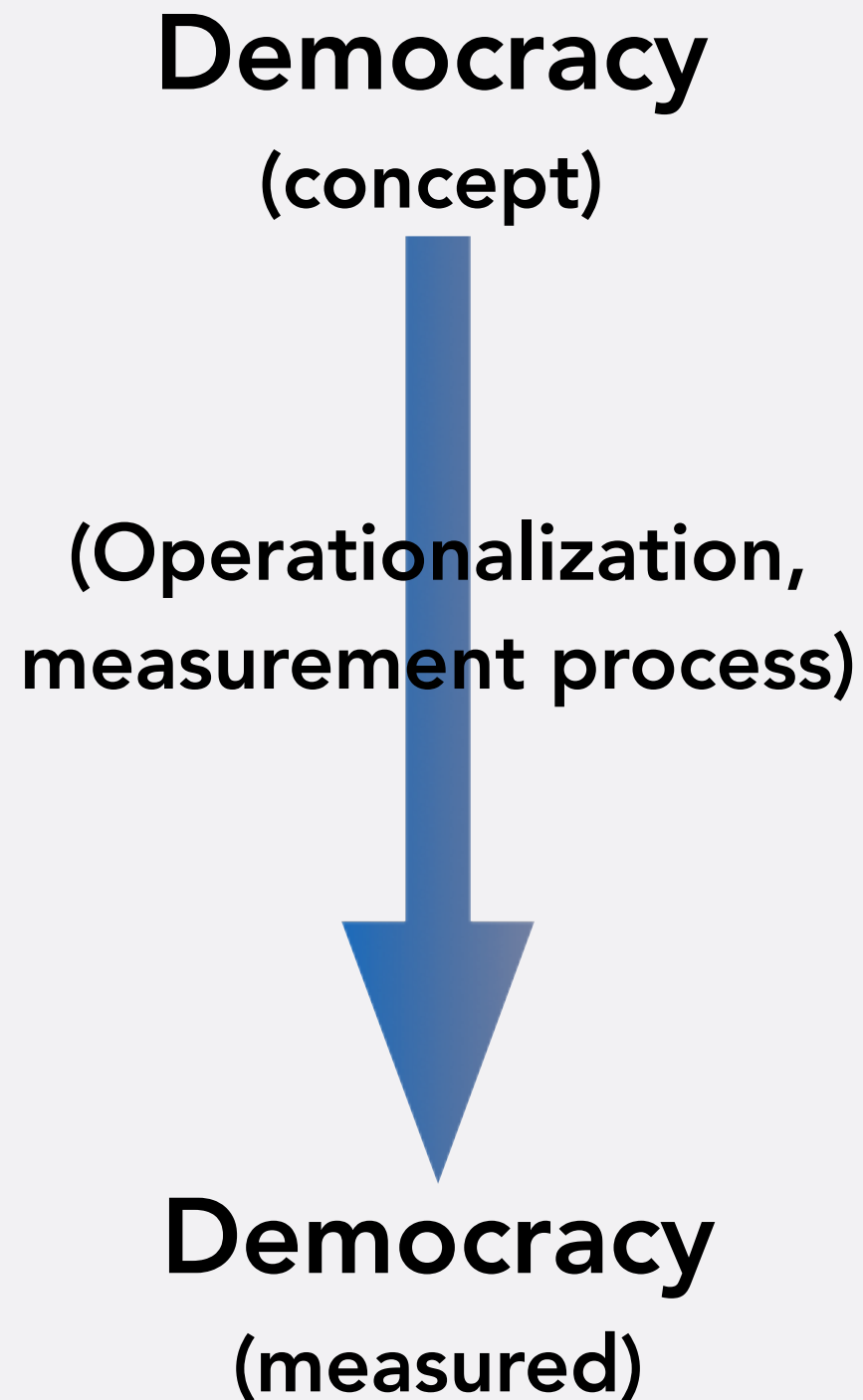


(Operationalization,
measurement process)



Dependent variable
(measured)

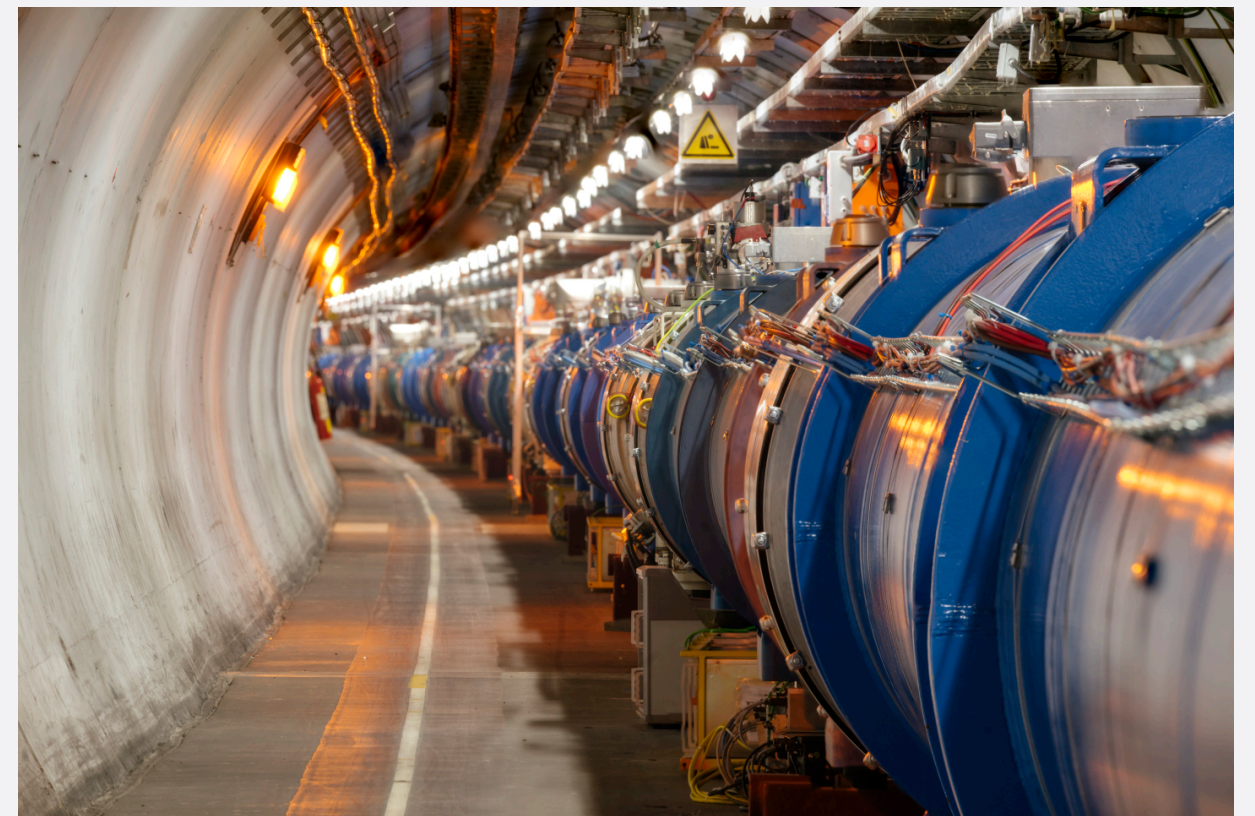
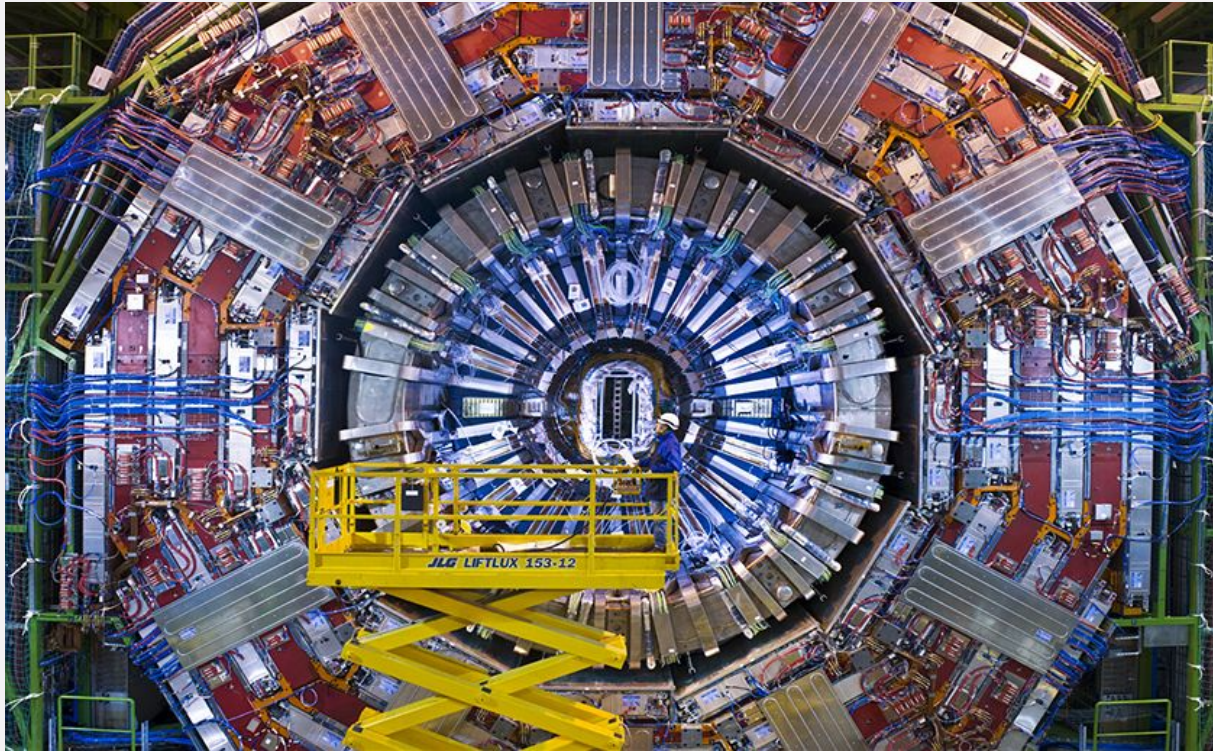
MEASUREMENT



TODAY

- **Concepts**
- **Measurement Process**
- **Measurement Issues**

MEASUREMENT

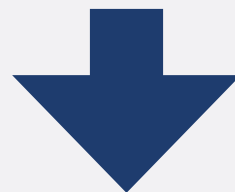


MEASUREMENT PROCESS

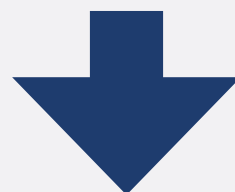
Concept



**Precise Definition of Concept
(Conceptual Definition)**



**Measurement Strategy
(Operational Definition)**



Variable

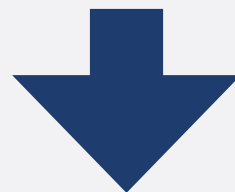
- **Also called “operationalization”**

MEASUREMENT PROCESS

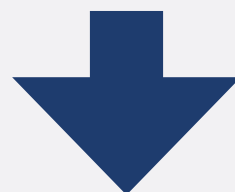
Concept



**Precise Definition of Concept
(Conceptual Definition)**



**Measurement Strategy
(Operational Definition)**



Variable

- **Example: Democracy**

MEASUREMENT PROCESS

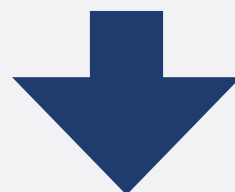
Concept



Precise Definition of Concept
(Conceptual Definition)



Measurement Strategy
(Operational Definition)



Variable

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

- The concept of _____ is defined as the extent to which _____ exhibit the characteristic of _____

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

- The concept of democracy is defined as the extent to which _____ exhibit the characteristic of _____

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

- The concept of democracy is defined as the extent to which countries exhibit the characteristic of _____

UNIT OF ANALYSIS

- Entity we want to describe: “unit of analysis”
- Individual-level
 - people
 - Religiosity, Conservatism, Liberalism, etc.
- Aggregate-level
 - groups of people (e.g. countries, regions)
 - Democracy, Press Freedom, etc.
 - also: religiosity...

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

- The concept of democracy is defined as the extent to which countries exhibit the characteristic of _____

CLARIFYING A CONCEPT

Democratic Country	Non-Democratic/Authoritarian Country

CLARIFYING A CONCEPT

Democratic Country	Non-Democratic/Authoritarian Country
How ruler is selected is regulated	Ruler becomes ruler through force/ seizing power
Rulers are selected through competitive elections	Rulers are selected through heredity succession or designation
Most people have (in principle) the opportunity to try to become ruler	Only some people have opportunity to become ruler (e.g. son of current ruler)
There are constraints on what the ruler can do	Ruler has unlimited authority ("above the law")

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

- The concept of democracy is defined as the extent to which countries exhibit the characteristic of _____

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION

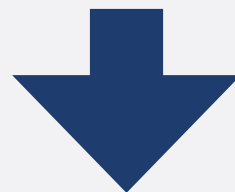
- The concept of democracy is defined as the extent to which countries exhibit the characteristic of having open and competitive contests to decide leadership

MEASUREMENT PROCESS

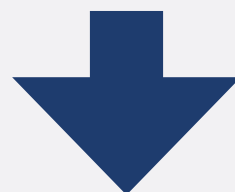
Concept



**Precise Definition of Concept
(Conceptual Definition)**



**Measurement Strategy
(Operational Definition)**



Variable