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**Has populism reached economics?
Two criteria for assessing normative empirical
concepts in economics**

Irene van Staveren

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Abstract

This paper attempts to understand why we generally feel that some normative empirical concepts in economics are unproblematic whereas others feel uncomfortable or misleading. I develop criteria to distinguish between the two on the basis of two notions from the philosophy of science: positional objectivity and thick concepts. I operationalize these with the help of two recent guidelines on good scientific practice that have been developed in debates around scientific integrity. This leads to two criteria: unavoidability and global evaluation. Following this discussion, the paper will present a case study on "ethnic fractionalization", popular in empirical research on the social determinants of economic growth. Throughout the paper I will make use of examples of other normative empirical concepts to further the understanding of the various ways in which such concepts violate the criteria that I have suggested.

Keywords

Economics; normative concepts; scientific integrity; populism; ethnic fractionalization.

Has populism reached economics? ¹

Two criteria for assessing normative empirical concepts in economics

Introduction

Normative concepts abound in economics. From efficiency to economic growth, and from utility maximization to poverty. In this paper, I will address normative empirical concepts, not theoretical ones. So, I will not go into concepts such as efficiency, Pareto Optimality, surplus value, animal spirits or utility maximization². And I will therefore not engage with the wider debates on values and ethics in economics, such as the debate on logical positivism and the positive-normative dichotomy. Instead, I will focus on normative empirical concepts, such as poverty, minimum wages, inferior goods, negative externalities, junk bonds, progressive taxation, debt, and fiscal discipline for example³. I define normative empirical concepts as terms for phenomena that can be observed in economic reality while the term chosen is not exclusively descriptive but also entails a value signalling the right or good versus wrong or bad of the underlying phenomenon. For example, it is obvious that most if not all economists want less rather than more poverty, because they regard it as something bad, while many but certainly not all economists are in favour of fiscal discipline as the right thing to do when an economy is in a recession or long term stagnation.

The example already indicates that some moral concepts are taken for granted throughout the discipline and are widely regarded as non-problematic, whereas others are contested, often implying different views related to different economic schools of thought. And even such normative concepts can be taken for granted by those who are part of a school of thought and using it without realizing its normative connotation. Utility maximization is a good example of this. I cannot count the number of times that I observed neoclassical economists claiming to do positive science and staying away from

¹ I am grateful to useful comments received at the Twentieth Anniversary Conference of EIPE, Erasmus University Rotterdam, 22-24 March 2017.

² In another paper I have analyzed the normativity of the concept of Pareto Efficiency on two grounds: its consequentialism and its strong no-harm principle (van Staveren, 2012).

³ When preparing this paper, I came up with a longer list of normative empirical concepts. I just share them here for those interested. And I immediately agree that the list may be much longer but also that some of the concepts may be regarded as partially theoretical as well. Here is my selection: poverty, economic growth, inequality, minimum wages, status good, inferior good, negative externality, collusion, distortion, market failure, moral hazard, balanced budget, free riding, junk bonds, merit goods, progressive taxes, brain drain, discrimination, securities, subprime loans, debt, shocks, capital controls, depreciation, dependency ratio, fiscal discipline, inclusive growth, sustainable development, consumer surplus, dumping, fair trade, tax holiday, social clauses, and human development.

ethics, while relying on the ethical theory of utilitarianism in their analysis. I am every time surprised that those economists tend to consider alternative ethical foundations, such as deontology or virtue ethics as normative but not utilitarianism.

The widespread use of normative concepts in economics leads to the question whether all normative empirical concepts in economics are problematic, from the perspective of what is generally agreed to represent good science. Or, to state it more precisely, whether they are all equally problematic or whether there are more benign forms of normativity and more problematic types of normativity in empirical concepts. Again, examples may help to clarify the issue at stake. In the next section, I will define more precisely what I mean with problematic. Here, I simply refer to examples.

There are many normative empirical concept in economics that tend to be taken for granted not only in economics but also outside, for example by policy makers and civil society organizations such as trade unions, associations of the elderly, or farmers cooperatives. Examples of these are concepts such as minimum wages, merit goods and fair trade. Such concepts generally do not raise much debate on what is meant (the moral implication), what is measured (the underlying phenomenon), and how it plays a role in economic explanation (whether it contributes to a shared understanding of the role of the phenomenon in economic analysis and policy debates). Everybody tends to agree on what the concept of a minimum wage is or what merit goods are. The disagreement is merely in whether one favours more of it or less of it.

Other normative empirical concepts are contested. Examples are economic growth (highly contested in ecological economics and in the environmental movement with competitive concepts such as de-growth), price distortions (regarded as right from the perspective of social protection for example but as wrong from the perspective of free markets), or securitization and securitization (in banking and finance generally regarded as a good strategy to reduce to uncertainty, but by Post Keynesians viewed as potentially bad because their dominance in finance would have formed a major driving force of the 2007/2008 financial crisis). These examples indicate a normative load that is not widely shared. That is precisely why marketing boards for sorghum and groundnuts in sub-Saharan Africa, guaranteeing farmers minimum prices and helping to stabilize market prices, are labelled as distortions by those against marketing boards while those in favour do not use that negative connotation but use terms such as "minimum prices", "protection of rural livelihoods", or "government support".

In this article I will develop criteria to distinguish more problematic from less problematic normative empirical concepts and I will argue why the first category is indeed more problematic than the second one. I will develop my argument with the help of generally accepted standards of good science because the integrity of researchers is key in distinguishing science from non-science according Heather Douglas (2015). My argument is built on to the six academic values that are laid down in the Dutch code of academic practice developed and agreed upon by the association of Dutch universities (VSNU, 2014): honesty & scrupulousness; reliability; verifiability; impartiality;

independence; responsibility. And I will also relate to the eight guiding principles as agreed by the American Statistical Association (ASA, 2016), for which the four most relevant for the analysis in this paper are: professional integrity and accountability; integrity of data and methods; responsibilities to science/public/funder/client; responsibilities to research subjects.

The remainder of this paper is structured as follows. Section 2 briefly discusses the relevant literature, focusing on fact-value entanglement and the notions of thick concepts and positional objectivity. Section 3 will present two criteria to distinguish more from less problematic normative empirical concepts and I will operationalize these with the help of two guidelines containing values for good scientific practice. Section 4 will present a case study of "ethnic fractionalization". Section 5 presents the conclusions with the help of a matrix.

Fact-value entanglement

Some normative concepts tend to be unavoidable. It would be very difficult, for example, to analyse poverty without using the term poverty. Measures such as the headcount ratio or the percentage deviation below modal income or the ranking on the multi-dimensional poverty index are different measures of poverty but they all need interpretation in terms of what they say about the extent of poverty in a country. Also alternative terms for poverty cannot evade moral signifiers either, for example "low-income groups" or "the deprived" or "those at the bottom of the income distribution". And poverty is not alone among moral concepts that seem unavoidable.

Hilary Putnam (2002) has characterised unavoidable moral signifiers in economic concepts as instances of fact-value entanglement. He has argued that some key economic concepts simply cannot be defined entirely neutrally because in the real world the phenomena they refer to are not neutral either. So, this implies that including a normative dimension in an empirical concept would rather be a reflection of an *adequate* description of a phenomenon observed in the real world, instead of a *biased* description. In turn, this would imply that a normative loading of an empirical concept would be biased if it reflects not so much the nature of the real world, with its vulnerabilities, uncertainties, bad luck, and power relations, but rather a particular worldview held by the economist introducing and/or using the normative concept. But even then, a certain extent of normativity in a concept reflecting a stance towards such real-world features may be justifiable as long as such a stance is accounted for. This is precisely what Amartya Sen (1993) has argued for when introducing the term 'positional objectivity' in economics, a recognition of the almost unavoidable social, political and cultural position from which economists do their work. As Sen (1993: 127) has stated it succinctly, there is no view from nowhere.

Anthony Atkinson (2009) has followed up on this in an article titled 'Economics as a Moral Science' by pointing out that many welfare analyses draw upon utilitarianism and use Pareto Optimality as the sole criterion for assessing welfare improvements and tend to ignore to provide justifications for

the conclusions drawn or policy advice given following these theoretical and methodological choices. He addresses welfare economists directly by stating, that "The question (...) is how their conclusions would change if Bentham were replaced by Rawls or Sen (...). Where people disagree about the desirability of a particular policy reform, is it possible that they do so because they are motivated by a different view of the objectives of society?" (Atkinson, 2009: 797). So, combining the insights from Putnam, Sen and Atkinson, a normative empirical concept may derive its normativity from the real-world phenomena it refers to or from a researcher's worldview.

Recently two philosophers have tested the claim of positionality for economists with the help of a survey asking economists about their stance on three types of statements. First, a list of typical neutral economic statements, then a list of normative economic statements, and finally a set of moral propositions (Randazzo and Haidt, 2015). The authors found "a close association between the moral values of economists and their normative economic views" (idem p. 53). Moreover, they also found "a relationship of roughly the same magnitude between economists' moral narratives and their empirical, technical 'positive' economic theories views, too" (idem). They therefore conclude that "... the work of economists, and subsequently their economics, is shaped by their moral values and narratives" (idem, p. 54). This supports Sen's argument that there is no such thing as full or complete objectivity in economics (and in any social science he has added). Economists simply hold worldviews, whether they acknowledge these or not, and these views tend to influence their analyses, including the construction, naming and use of economic concepts.

Let's take a deeper look at normative empirical concepts with the help of the notion of "thick concepts" introduced in philosophy by Bernard Williams (1985). He has defined thick concepts as concepts that have both an evaluative and a descriptive dimension, such as "cruel" or "generous". And he argues that their thickness derives from the way the world is, so, referring to real world phenomena. The debate following Williams' introduction and discussion of thick concepts has led to the question whether the normative and the descriptive dimensions can be separated or not. The conclusion seems to be that for a concept to be recognized as thick both dimensions are entangled in such a way that they cannot be separated - they are regarded as inherently evaluative (Kirchin, 2013). Finally, on the evaluative dimension itself, most philosophers seem to agree that the moral meaning is given through semantics. Väyrynen (2016) formulates it as follows: "the semantic (truth-conditional) meanings of thick terms and concepts contain global evaluations".

In conclusion, the brief discussion of fact-value entanglement and thick concepts helps us to understand normative empirical concepts in economics as follows:

- they are characterized by an avoidable or unavoidable fact-value entanglement (I use the term avoidable rather than separable because it is stronger and implies that the moral semantic component can be replaced not just by another moral semantic component but also by a less or non-evaluative

one and that the concept still is useful and meaningful, that is, referring to observable and measurable phenomena)

- the entanglement can be derived from the morality inherent in real-world phenomena or from the morality of a worldview held by an economist, policy agency or research funder (or both real-world and worldview related, but for the sake of keeping the analysis not unnecessarily complicated I will disregard this last option)

So, a first necessary criterion for a normative empirical concept that is generally considered to be unproblematic is that the normativity is unavoidable, because it cannot be described otherwise than with an evaluative term (using semantics). Hence, the moral connotation is not only separable but also unavoidable: any substitute is inevitably normative as well. For example, no economic policy report or academic article on poverty starts with justifying why it analyses poverty and why it uses the term poverty. The normativity in the concept is generally taken for granted as unavoidable and reflecting global evaluative worldview along the lines of "poverty is something bad that we should try to avoid or reduce".

For the concept of inequality this is less clear. It may slip in a particular worldview of the economist with a particular agenda for change. Therefore, studies of inequality in economics tend to require a justification of the selection of what type of inequality one analyses in order to be widely accepted as relevant. This is because other than poverty, not all forms of inequality are considered bad. For example, differences in talent that result in income differences. Having less talent may be an unfortunate difference with those who have a lot of talent, which in addition is in high demand in the labour market and thus generating high incomes, but such subsequent income differences do not necessarily deserve the evaluative label of "inequality", because they are generally not regarded as wrong. So, whereas the analysis of poverty requires hardly any justification by the economist because it reflects a value-laden real-world phenomenon or a widely shared view that poverty is bad, the analysis of inequality does require justification in terms of answering the question of 'inequality of what and why this dimension is considered relevant and not another one?' Such justifications are indeed being supplied by well-known economists and economic policy agencies, for example in the study of inequality in capital (for example Piketty, 2014) in the global income distribution (for example Milanovic, 2016) or in gender (for example by the IMF in a recent working paper by IMF staff member Stotsky et. al, 2016).

So, a second necessary criterion for a normative empirical concept to fall within the realm of good science is the extent to which the normative semantic component refers to global evaluations instead of a particular evaluative worldview held by an economist, policy institution or research funder. What matters here is that the normativity of an empirical concept is generally accepted as deriving from features of the real world, or that it stems from global evaluations in worldviews that cannot be traced to any particular ideology, power relation, political goal or religious dogma. For this second option a justification is needed for the formulation and use of the normative empirical concept: the positionality of the economist, agency or funder must be

made explicit in order for the scientific community to assess whether the concept is indeed an empirical concept that can be used in testing theories or evaluating policies, or whether the concept already includes particular theoretical or policy standpoints and therefore cannot be used as an empirical concept for testing a theory-derived hypothesis.

Now, what about avoidable normative concepts? Are they necessarily problematic from the perspective of good scientific practices? This depends on *why* they include an evaluative dimension in the first place. Some concepts are just easier to use than a long description even if this implies using an evaluative semantic component. Think about the "discouraged worker effect" in labour economics. It could be replaced by a neutral term such as "decline-in-labour-supply-in-response-to-lower-demand-for-labour-effect". But the normative term is shorter and immediately captures the "in response to" part of the description, which makes it such a meaningful concept. Other normative concepts may also not be problematic but simply not well-chosen, they may be sloppy or vague for example. Think about social capital for example. Social capital has a positive connotation - who can be against it? It also is a term that immediately conveys its basic message, namely that besides physical, financial and human capital there is also productive value in social networks, shared norms and trust in a society. But some researchers have pointed out that some forms of social capital are divisive and harm innovation and growth, for example the social capital of the mafia (Putnam, 1993). Hence, the positive connotation is contested.

The next section will further detail the criteria on the grounds of two agreed and respected guidelines of good scientific practice from within the scientific community.

Criteria and arguments for assessing normative empirical concepts

As explained in the introduction, I will rely on the widely used Dutch code of conduct for academic practice of the association of Dutch universities (VSNU, 2014) for a more detailed analysis of why some normative empirical concepts are deemed to be problematic. The code of conduct accepts that doing science cannot be separated from values. Moreover, it establishes core values of doing good science, across all disciplines, including economics. The background of the code is "the generally shared conviction that staff members at institutions that fulfill a societal role are held to a proper exercise of their duties." (VSNU, 2014: 3). The code has elaborated the "proper exercise of their duties" in six values, referred to as principles: honesty & scrupulousness, reliability, verifiability, impartiality, independence and responsibility. For economics, it is also relevant to look at a guideline for quantitative analysis, because that is how empirical concepts are often operationalized in economics. The American Statistical Association has recently published guidelines with standards for good statistical practice (ASA, 2016). The purpose of the guidelines is to ensure that "good statistical practice is fundamentally based on transparent assumptions, reproducible results, and valid interpretations." (ASA, 2016: 1).

I propose that the combination of these two sets of ethical standards form a useful reference for evaluating normative empirical concepts in economics. I admit that there are other standards, values, principles and guidelines available, but most of these are very likely to overlap and not to differ substantially. I have not undertaken a comparison of such ethical standards but have selected two that I am familiar with, that have relatively recently been agreed upon, and that are used as a frame of reference in my own research environment. Let me now review a selection of the most relevant standards in these two guidelines for the purpose at hand.

Honesty and scrupulousness:

Two elaborations of the code on these related two values are of particular importance (VSNU, 2014: 5). First, as mentioned in article 1.1: "Academic practitioners know that the ultimate aim of science is to establish facts and they therefore must present the nature and scope of their results with the greatest possible precision." Second, as mentioned in article 1.6: "Scrupulousness is expressed through precision and nuance in academic instruction and research, in publishing research results and in other forms of knowledge transfer." Taken together, the first value (or actually two related values) in the code emphasizes facts, precision as well as nuance. I will refer to these in relation to the choice of terminology of empirical concepts: are they as precise as possible, yet nuanced to prevent a claim to precision it cannot defend, and are they as much as possible factual rather than involving judgment?

Reliability:

The code's definition of this value is: "Academic practitioners act reliably when they perform their research in a conscientious manner and provide a full account of the research conducted. This ensures that scientific and scholarly research can be traced, verified and re-tested." (VSNU, 2014: 7). This implies that the empirical phenomenon referred to in a normative concept and its operationalization in a measurement need to be fully accounted for.

Verifiability:

The definition states, that: "conduct is verifiable when it is possible for others to assess whether it complies with relevant standards (for instance quality or reliability)" (VSNU, 2014: 8). Here the reference to relevant standards remains vague but in quantitative research, which is the dominant methodology in economics, we can find the "relevant standards" in best statistical practices. Here is where I refer to the guidelines provided by the American Statistical Association (ASA, 2016). The first ASA guideline is about professional integrity and accountability. It states that: "The ethical statistician uses methodology and data that are relevant and appropriate, without favoritism or prejudice, and in a manner intended to produce valid, interpretable, and reproducible results." (ASA, 2016: 2). The second guideline is about data and methods. It emphasizes the validity of data and the need to address potential

confounding variables not included in the study. Another guideline that is relevant here is about responsibility to research subjects. This guideline explicitly states, that: "the ethical statistician recognizes that any statistical descriptions of groups may carry risks of stereotypes and stigmatization. Statisticians should contemplate, and be sensitive to, the manner in which information is framed so as to avoid disproportionate harm to vulnerable groups." (ASA, 2016: 5).

From the guidelines for ethical statistical practices, it becomes clear that normative concepts that are quantified and are generally regarded as non-problematic must be based on transparent assumptions and valid interpretations, without prejudice, with a check for possible confounding variables and preventing stereotyping and stigmatization of groups.

Impartiality:

The definition of this value refers to objectivity and dis-interestedness, but these elements are contested from those social sciences perspectives in which researchers choose their research topic precisely because of a social concern. The definition of the code reads as follows: "Academic practitioners are impartial and objective when they do not let personal interest, preference, affections, prejudice or the interests of the commissioning or funding body affect their judgment and decisions." (VSNU, 2014: 9) Academic staff and PhD students of the International Institute of Social Studies (where I am employed) have developed a supplement to this value in the ISS declaration of scientific integrity, in order to accommodate the positionality of its researchers as engaged with problems of poverty and injustice. The addendum includes the following two qualifications relevant to the analysis of normative concepts⁴. The first is: "Objectivity is a vital guiding principle but is at the same time inevitably positional (Amartya Sen). This requires researchers to aim for awareness and transparency about their standpoint, frames and guiding principles." The second qualification is: "Impartiality and independence are principles to rule out pre-determined conclusions, and in particular to rule out domination by the interests of funders and other power-holders and also of the researcher. They further rule out assessment of other researchers' work using reasons other than scientific quality. They should never be interpreted as in conflict with undertaking research of high societal relevance, and in particular research that seeks to support the articulation, promotion and defence of the rights and interests of persons and groups who are marginalized, vulnerable and/or disadvantaged."

To summarize, what is key for the analysis of normative concepts in economics is that researchers are transparent about their positionality, do not have pre-determined conclusions and are not influenced by the interests of funders and prejudices, including their own private interests. But this still

⁴ URL:

https://www.iss.nl/fileadmin/ASSETS/iss/Research_and_projects/Research_ethics_ctte/ISS_Declaration_Scientific_Integrity_v20141215.pdf (Accessed 27 April 2017).

allows for normative concepts used to support the rights and interests of those who are marginalized and disadvantaged.

Independence

This value in the code is concerned with academic freedom and independence from commissioning parties and funders. The code has no elaboration that is specific to normative concepts.

Responsibility

The sixth and final value in the code is the principle that: "Academic practitioners acknowledge their responsibility for the societal implications of their work. They are willing to discuss and explain their choice of research themes." (VSNU, 2014: 11) I just like to add, reflecting some of the other principles reviewed above, that this responsibility extends beyond research themes and also includes research approaches, methods, measurement, and statistical analysis. In article 6.1 the code elaborates this by stating that: "Researchers are willing and able to justify their choice of research themes both in advance and in retrospect. Researchers provide a clear and full account of how research funds were used and which choices this involved." (VSNU, 2014: 11) So, this final value implies that the choice of normative concepts should involve a justification of possible societal implications of research using these concepts.

The review above implies that for conforming to standards of good science, normative empirical concepts in economics, need to be:

- factual
- precise
- nuanced
- accountable
- measured without prejudice
- selected in relation to confounding variables
- preventing stereotyping and stigmatization
- transparent in relation to what is considered salient in the real world
- free from the domination of self-interest of researchers, policy agencies or funders

These standards help to identify *if or how* the evaluative component may be avoidable and *when* a worldview reflected in the evaluative component violates standards of good scientific practice. For each of the two criteria, this leads to two questions:

1. Unavoidability?

A normative empirical concept is unavoidable when:

- 1a. there exists no non-evaluative formulation for the same concept that is more factual, precise, more nuanced and/or not prejudiced
- 1b. there exists no confounding variable (a different empirical concept with a different measure) with a term that is theoretically expected to lead to equal or better statistical results, showing less error, stronger correlations, bigger size effects, or higher statistical significance

2. Economics or a particular economic worldview?

A normative empirical concept reflects economics, as a broad field within the social sciences, rather than a particular evaluation in a worldview when:

- 2a. the evaluative term is transparent and accountable in relation to what is considered to be salient in the real world
- 2b. the evaluative term does not stereotype or stigmatize certain groups in the real world

These four questions will be used in the case study that I will discuss in the next section.

Case study: ethnic fractionalization

Ethnic division and fractionalization

Ethnicity is a widely used concept in the social sciences, from anthropology to political science. In economics this is not the case. Instead, there is much more use of terms such as social groups (e.g. the rich, the poor, women, migrants), classes (capital and labour), income classifications (such as household income percentiles) or functional groups (e.g. labour, investors, or entrepreneurs). Until suddenly, in the year 1997, the concept "ethnic divisions" turned up in a dataset and in growth regressions indicating that for Africa, "ethnic division" was associated with less economic growth (Easterly and Levine, 1997). William Easterly and Ross Levine assembled the data and published the article in the *Quarterly Journal of Economics* while at the World Bank⁵. The title of their article also included the concept and another normative term, "tragedy". The combination of the terms gives a relatively strong negative normative message in the title, which reads in full: "Africa's growth tragedy: policies and ethnic divisions".

Merriam Webster's Dictionary describes "division" as follows⁶: "the act or process of dividing" and also uses the terms separation, disagreement, and disunity. The synonyms that the dictionary lists are the following: "part, portion, piece, member, section, segment, fragment ...". This list is followed by an explanation of these terms as "... something less than the whole."

⁵ Their article included the usual disclaimer in the first footnote "Views expressed here should not be taken as those of the World Bank or its member governments." - Easterly and Levine, 1996: 1203.

⁶ URL: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/divisions> (Accessed 27 April 2017).

Easterly and Levine also refer to terms as "polarization" and suggest that this is related to rent-seeking and disagreement on the provision of public goods (p. 1205-1206). However, they also use a more neutral term "ethnic diversity", even in the formulation of their hypothesis on p. 1205: "This paper examines a simple hypothesis: cross-country differences in ethnic diversity explain a substantial part of the cross-country differences in public policies, political instability, and other economic factors associated with long-run growth." The variable they use to measure ethnic divisions is labelled ETHNIC and measures "ethnolinguistic diversity"(p. 1206). So, the measure simply reflects the *number* of ethnic groups in a country. ETHNIC does *not* measure divisions through group tensions, conflicts, disagreements or power relationships such as dominance or polarization. The empirical result that Easterly and Levine report for Africa over the period 1960-1989 is a statistically significant negative effect of their ETHNIC variable on GDP growth.

The paper has had a huge impact on development economics: it has been cited over 5,000 times to date according to Google Scholar⁷. It led to many other studies using the concept. A Google Scholar search for the term "ethnic divisions" for the first ten years (1997-2006) reveals about 11,000 articles using the concept. For the next ten-year period (2007-2016) the number increases to over 16,000 papers using the concept. In the twenty years before publication, Google Scholar found less than 5,000 papers using the term.

The most influential follow-up study was published by a team of five authors including Easterly: Alesina et al. (2003). Again, the article was published in a highly ranked economics journal: the *Journal of Economic Growth*. And again, it had a normative title, this time in just one word: "Fractionalization". Google Scholar shows that the concept "ethnic fractionalization", which the paper uses abundantly, is used in the following ten-year period (2003-2012) 9,000 times and in the last four years (2013-2016) 6,000 times. Before the publication of the article by Alesina et al. (2003), in the previous twenty years (1983-2002) it was used less than 2,000 times. The peer-reviewed literature database Scopus returns 122 publications with "ethnic fractionalization" in the title, as a keyword or in the abstract published between 2003 and March 2017⁸. The article by Alesina et al. has 1407 citations in Scopus, which are limited to citations in internationally peer reviewed publications.

A review of all these 122 abstracts in Scopus with the concept "ethnic fractionalization" gives preliminary indications of how the key article has impacted upon the literature. I have analysed 121 abstracts (one article had no

⁷ URL:

https://scholar.google.nl/scholar?q=Africa%27s+growth+tragedy:+policies+and+ethnic+divisions&hl=nl&as_sdt=0&as_vis=1&oi=scholart&sa=X&ved=0ahUKewiijcO92eTSAhVGthQKHUAYATUQgQMIGjAA Accessed: 20 March 2017.

⁸ See URL: <https://www.elsevier.com/solutions/scopus> (Accessed 27 April 2017).

Scopus is labeled the largest abstract and citation database of peer-reviewed literature.

abstract) on three criteria: use of the same database as in Alesina et. al (2003), use of revised data and/or relevant confounding variables, and whether the results challenge the conclusions drawn in the original article on a negative relationship between ethnic diversity and economic growth, or on other indicators of development (such as health, democracy, or the absence of conflicts). Table 1 below shows the results of this textual analysis in absolute numbers and percentages (between brackets) of all 121 abstracts analysed. The last column shows the number of articles that uses the same database but reaches different conclusions that the original article does: 38 abstracts, which is 31 per cent of all abstracts analysed. Although more detailed analysis of each publication is necessary, this preliminary result suggests that the analysis in the original paper is contested.

Table 1
Textual analysis of 121 Scopus abstracts on "ethnic fractionalization"

same database	revised data/relevant confounding variables	challenge original conclusions	same data and challenge conclusions
83 (69%)	83 (69%)	42 (35%)	38 (31%)

Source: Author's analysis over the period January 2003-March 2017.

The 2003 article largely uses the concept of "ethnic fractionalization" but also adds "linguistic fractionalization" and "religious fractionalization", all referring to numbers of groups: the more groups, the more fractionalization. In addition, they compare the relative size of groups with an additional measure named "polarization", but show that it leads only to weak results in the estimations. For my case study in this section, I will limit myself to the analysis of the concept of "ethnic fractionalization".

The term fractionalization is defined in Merriam Webster's dictionary as⁹: "the act or process of a whole separating into two or more parts or pieces." Hence, it does not refer to a static situation in which there are more groups versus a situation of less groups, but to a dynamic situation in which groups separate. The dictionary lists several synonyms, and, just like the definition of the term itself, all have relatively negative connotations referring to groups falling apart: "bifurcation, breakup, cleavage, dissolution, disunion, division, separation, fractionation, partition, schism, scission, split, sundering". The list of related words that the dictionary then mentions contains even stronger moral connotations: "breach, rupture, divorce, severance, decomposition,

⁹ URL: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/thesaurus/fractionalization>. (Accessed 13 March, 2017).

disassembly, dismemberment, segmentation, subdivision, atomization, dichotomization, polarization, diffusion, dispersal, dispersion, scattering, administration, apportionment, distribution, isolation, seclusion, segregation, sequestration".

The measure that Alesina et al. use is similar to that by Easterly and Levine (1997): they measure the number of ethnic groups. This leads to an index between 0 and 1 with 0 referring to a single ethnic group in a country and 1 to the theoretical possibility of every individual belonging to a different ethnic group. They report that in total their database covers approximately 650 distinct ethnic groups in 190 countries (p. 160). The conclusion of Alesina et. al is very similar to the original one: "... we broadly confirm the results by Easterly and Levine (1997). In fact the negative effects of ethnic fragmentation on growth is reinforced with the new data ..." (Alesina et. al 2003, p. 157). What is striking in this formulation, is that they use a substitute for "fractionalization", namely "fragmentation" (which is in the synonym list from the dictionary mentioned above used in a slightly different form, namely as "fractionation"). In a broader follow-up paper published two years later in the *Journal of Economic Literature*, Alberto Alesina and Eliana La Ferrara (2005) use a much less normative concept in their title: "Ethnic diversity and economic performance". The title sounds less dramatic than those of the other two articles. But in the 2005 article, there is again abundant use of the term ethnic fractionalization, including in the tables reporting empirical results for ethnic and linguistic fractionalization.

Before assessing the concept of ethnic fractionalization, it may be useful to look briefly at an overview of the concept of ethnicity as used in anthropology that was available to both Easterly and Levine and to Alesina et. al. I have chosen the book "Ethnicity and nationalism - anthropological perspectives" by Thomas Hylland Eriksen that was published in 1993. The book gives some key insights into how the term is (or at least in the early 1990s) understood in anthropology and what this implies for its use as an empirical concept in economics. Eriksen (1993) makes clear that the term comes from social anthropology and concerns groups and their relationships. More precisely, it refers to groups, which consider themselves and are regarded by others as being culturally distinctive. Hence, it is a relational concept leading to a social identity rather than a natural one based on race for example. And the relationships between ethnic groups can be economic, social, political, and symbolic, while these can, but do not necessarily, involve matters of power differences and costs and benefits, Eriksen explains.

So, a measure for ethnicity then would simply count the number of groups in an area or a country and possibly calculate the size of groups. If one would like to take account of the meaning of ethnic identity, one should also measure how ethnic groups relate to each other. This requires first the choice of a relevant relational dimension: economic, social, political or symbolic. And then one needs to choose the defining characteristic of such a relationship. For example, access to resources such as land, education, income or wealth for the economic dimension. Which, in turn may lead to the use of measures reflecting normative empirical concepts such as "income inequality between ethnic

groups" or "educational gaps between ethnic groups". For the social and political dimensions, power comes in. This could lead to measures reflecting normative empirical concepts such as "social conflict between ethnic groups" or "ethnic-groups based political parties" or "control over natural resources by ethnic group".

"Ethnic fractionalization" is a reflection of separation of groups if we follow the dictionary closely. But since the authors do not seem to be concerned with a trend leading existing groups falling apart in smaller ones, the concept rather seems to refer to tensions between ethnic groups. This brings the intended meaning closer to the synonyms of "division" and "segmentation". But the authors of all three articles have not measured any characteristic referring to a relationship between ethnic groups. They do not include a separate or integrated measure of division or segmentation between ethnic groups. They simply counted the number of ethnic groups per country, using secondary data on ethnicity.

What becomes clear from a closer look to their actual measure, control variables in their estimations, and the choice of semantics for the empirical concept concerned, is that they have chosen a term that implies a negative evaluation but without justification by the actual measurement and estimation, leading to their key message that the more fractionalization of ethnic groups, the worse it is for the economic growth of a country. All three articles demonstrate a negative effect of the variable on growth and two of the three have dramatic titles for the articles to get the message across. But in all three articles, the measure remains the same: it is simply a counting of the number of ethnic groups per country. So, a purely descriptive measure, not including any characteristic of how the groups relate to each other. Not along economic lines, nor along socio-political lines.

So, "ethnic fractionalization" is a normative concept that intends to convey a message of "tragedy" (Easterly and Levine, 1997) or of divisiveness along ethnic lines as in "fractionalization" (Alesina et. al, 2003 and 2005). This suggests that the choice of the concept is not simply a case of sloppiness but of ideology: the articles convey a message not despite but precisely because of their choice of empirical concept for ethnic heterogeneity.

Economic populism?

What kind of ideology may be reflected here? It has at least two clear features. First, it has a disregard for facts, as is clear from the obvious mismatch between variable name and article titles and messages on the one hand, and variable measure on the other hand. Second, the message portrays ethnic heterogeneity as economically disadvantageous. These two features are also strongly present in populism - at least as we see it in the rhetoric of Le Pen (France), Wilders (the Netherlands), UKIP (UK), and Trump (US) for example. A recent analysis of populism (Müller, 2016) defines it as an anti-pluralist politics with a moral claim to representation. Importantly, Müller argues that populist claims are moral and symbolic rather than empirically testable. A related perspective is offered by Kirk Hawkins (2009), who takes a

discursive approach to the definition and measurement of populism in political parties. He defines populism as a set of ideas expressed in a moral framework of a struggle between good and evil. What is regarded as good and what as evil differs from party to party, but seems to involve simplification and an image of "others", of "them", groups that are seen to threaten the interests of "the people", or even "the nation" as Carlos de la Torre (2007) labels the discursive threat. It is indeed a threat to the nation, in particular through constrained economic growth, to which the authors of the three articles on ethnic fractionalization appeal. This observation of scapegoating is also part of a political-institutional approach to populism, according to Martine Rode and Julio Revuelta (2015). They argue that this approach focuses on a shift in democratic institutions but also recognizes a "preoccupation with identifying a group of outsiders or hypothetical enemies" (Rode and Revuelta, 2015: 76-77)

Two recent issues on Trumponomics of the *Real World Economics Review*, a pluralist online economic debate journal, make the connections between populism and economics. Jamie Morgan (2017: 6) argues that "the context that makes populism significant as a political force is that the many who are appealed to can be swayed, galvanised or co-opted because of their contrastive experience of the world around them, and because they currently are not or feel that they are not represented and recognized." This appeal seems precisely what Donald Trump has made use of when putting the blame of the vulnerable economic situation of white middle class men on Muslims and Latino's: "What Trump has done is offer some a future they want to believe in" (Morgan, 2017: 6). He further explains that populism is associated with the reduction of complex matters to simple causes and consequences. "The reduction need not be coherent or consistent it need only be effective. It may well be effective *because* it lacks actual content and *because* it resists or refuses to respond to calls to be substantive, or to justify itself in terms of evidence" (Morgan, 2017: 6). This, he concludes, leads to a conflictual approach to economic complex issues, from unemployment to globalization and economic growth. In the case of US president Trump, this has resulted in "... the overt demonizing of multiple "others", according to William Neil (2017: 15). And Jacobsen and Alexander (2017: 139) add in a similar vein that "... intensifying divisiveness is the way Trump instinctively promotes his agenda".

Also in these analyses, although referring to Trump and not to developing countries or the world at large, the two features that form part of a variety of definitions of populism are present: a disregard for facts, for example through simplifications and promises of an ideal world that cannot be delivered, and scapegoating of others on the basis of their ethnic-religious background. We find both elements in the three articles discussed in the case study. Of course, more detailed analysis of the discourses used in the articles and in the literature that has emerged from it using the same data is necessary before one can conclude that the ideas represent some form of populism. What matters for this case study is that it seems likely that the normative empirical concepts of ethnic division and ethnic fractionalization, and the titles and messages in the articles relying on these concepts, are not chosen

randomly or involve a slip of the pen and should simply be considered as accidental.

The econometrics of the variable use

Now, what about the empirical results: don't they justify the negative moral overtones? So, even if there is some populism reflected in the use of term "ethnic fractionalization" in the articles, isn't there a real argument about ethnic diversity and growth? If countries with more ethnic groups tend to have lower long-term economic growth, that does seem something to worry about in development economics. In other words, if indeed ethnic homogeneity supports growth whereas ethnic heterogeneity constrains growth, aren't the negative moral connotations about ethnic diversity justified after all?

This depends on the actual estimations that the articles have carried out. Looking into the econometrics, it is striking to see that the empirical estimations have ignored to control for variables that measure relationships between ethnic groups. And that relatedness between ethnic groups is precisely what is implied by the term fractionalization. There are no variables used concerning differences in access to or control over resources between ethnic groups. There are no variables measuring conflict, marginalization or social exclusion of groups. Some estimations have used household income inequality but this cuts across ethnic groups and therefore is not a relevant control variable. So, the estimations do not make clear whether the negative correlation of ethnic diversity with growth stems from the number of ethnic groups as such or rather from how in some countries groups live in tension with each other rather than in peaceful co-existence.

This is precisely why a co-author and I have re-done the estimations with the inclusion of a relevant confounding variable and with social cohesion as the dependent variable because that was one of the key channels identified in the three articles through which ethnic diversity would affect growth (van Staveren and Pervaiz, 2017). We were not able to publish this in a top economics journal but were happy to publish it in a relevant field-journal, namely the journal *Social Indicators Research*, which critically reviews social, economic and political indicators and their use on the social sciences. Using similar estimations as in the three key articles on ethnic fractionalization, we were able to show that as soon as one includes a confounding variable for social exclusion of minorities, the statistical relevance and the negative sign for "ethnic fractionalization" disappear¹⁰. We used a variable from a database developed at the Institute of Social Studies, where I work, and where I am responsible for managing the database. The database was launched in 2011 so the variable for "exclusion of minorities" was not available to the researchers when they published their work. However, there were other relevant variables available that they could have used as confounding variables, for example those

¹⁰ We are currently following-up on our analysis with full growth regression and our preliminary results confirm our earlier results: also in the growth regressions, ethnic fractionalization turns statistically insignificant when we add exclusion of minorities.

on internal conflict (see, for example data from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program, UCDP¹¹).

It seems that the normative empirical concept of ethnic fractionalization is problematic not only in terms of a mismatch between the label and what is actually measured but also in terms of ignoring relevant confounding variables. This brings us back to the two questions about normative empirical concepts: is the normativity unavoidable or not and does the term fit economics in general or does it reflect a particular economic worldview?

On unavoidability, my discussion above has pointed out that there exists a non-evaluative formulation for the same concept that is more factual, precise, more nuanced and not prejudiced: ethnic diversity, or ethnic variation. Moreover, my re-estimations with Zahid Pervaiz have shown that there also exists a confounding variable that is theoretically expected to lead to equal or better statistical results, showing less error, stronger correlation, bigger size effects, or higher statistical significance. So, both sub-criteria for unavoidability are not met, leading to the conclusion that the term "ethnic fractionalization" is not unavoidable on the basis of the values of good scientific practice.

On economics, my discussion has indicated that the worldview expressed in the evaluative term is not transparent and accountable in relation to what is considered salient in the real world because of the mismatch between label and measure and the lack of clarification for this choice. Moreover, the worldview expressed in the evaluative term stereotypes or stigmatizes certain groups because it suggests that ethnic groups are falling more and more apart or that their relations are tense, which is neither justified by the measure used nor by the specification of the estimations. Hence, also for the criterion of economics the concept of "ethnic fractionalization" fails both sub-criteria, leading to the conclusion that the normativity of the concept is not justified on the basis of common standards of good scientific practice.

The conclusion reached is rather strong, indicating that the normative empirical concept of "ethnic fractionalization" has failed both criteria and within each both sub-criteria for meeting the standards of good scientific practice. Of course, I selected this concept on purpose in order to show that normative concepts are not necessarily all unavoidable and reflecting a morality inherent in the real world. Obviously there will be many other concepts that will be much less problematic when scrutinized with the same criteria.

Conclusions

The discussion in this paper and the case study have argued which criteria are relevant for assessing whether a normative empirical concept is justified on the grounds of good scientific practice and which ones less so or not at all. The case of ethnic fractionalization appeared to be quite an extreme case, failing on both criteria. Instead, the concept appears to be ideological with parallels to

¹¹ URL: <http://www.ucdp.uu.se/> (Accessed 27 April 2017).

populism in the extent to which both disregard facts and appeal to negative feelings about the effects of ethnic diversity on the economy.

It is likely that other normative empirical concepts do not fail at all or only fail one of the two criteria. If this is indeed the case, and concepts such as poverty and the discouraged worker effect that I have referred to earlier indicate that this is the case, it seems possible to summarize the options in a two-by-two matrix. The matrix identifies four possible types of normative empirical concepts, depending on their unavoidability and acceptance throughout economics. Figure 1 shows the matrix with four cells, A, B, C and D, and several examples just for illustration (only one I have argued for, in the case study).

The matrix distinguishes four possibilities for the assessment whether normative empirical concepts conform to standards of good scientific practice.

Cell A combines unavoidability and acceptance throughout economics. Following the discussion above, this seems to be the least problematic type of normative concept and acceptable according to common standards of good scientific practice. Examples are poverty, economic growth, human development and debt. The type of concepts in cell B reflect acceptance throughout economics, but the normative connotation is avoidable: it is separable from the descriptive part of the concept and can be replaced by less or non-evaluative semantics. However, this is often not done for pragmatic reasons. So, they are not as factual and nuanced as is possible but there seems

Figure 1
Assessment tool for normative empirical concepts and examples

	unavoidability	avoidability
	A	B
accepted throughout economics	poverty economic growth human development debt	discouraged worker effect brain drain dumping social clauses
	D	C
particular economic worldview	distortion discrimination fiscal discipline fair trade	ethnic fractionalization

to be no prejudice but a general understanding and acceptance because they do reflect precision, probably not *despite* the normativity but *because* of the normativity in the concept. It is for this reason that they are generally not regarded as violating standards of good scientific practice. Examples are the discouraged worker effect, brain drain, dumping and social clauses.

The normativity of concepts in cell C is avoidable by using different semantics, while in addition the concept reflects a particular economic worldview. Hence, concepts in cell C do not conform to various standards of good scientific practice: they seem to violate several values that define good academic practices in science in general or in statistics in particular. The concept of ethnic fractionalization is the example that I have argued to belong to this category. Finally, cell D combines unavoidability with a particular economic worldview rather than a view that is accepted throughout the economics discipline, irrespective to which school of thought one belongs. This may be problematic when the economic view is not accounted for, that is, when the economist hides or does not convincingly justify his or her positionality, which is likely to reflect a particular theoretical stance in economics.

In conclusion, I have formulated two criteria to assess whether normative empirical concepts comply with or violate common standards of good scientific practice: unavoidability and acceptance throughout economics. The case study on ethnic fractionalization has shown that this normative concept is problematic because it fails on both criteria. Whether the two criteria are helpful for the assessment of other normative empirical concepts is yet unknown. Further research on a variety of concepts would help to clarify this and they may also contribute to challenge or amend the criteria - which I all very much welcome.

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Appendices

Annex table
article selection from Scopus on "ethnic fractionalization" in title, abstract, and/or key words, 2003-2017

First author	Title	Year	Source title	Volume	Issue	Page start	Page end
Arin K.P.	A note on the macroeconomic consequences of ethnic/racial tension	2017	<i>Economics Letters</i>	155		100	103
Python A.	Provoking local ethnic violence – A global study on ethnic polarization and terrorist targeting	2017	<i>Political Geography</i>	58		77	89
Emenalo C.O.	Historical institutional determinants of financial system development in Africa	2017	<i>Journal of Institutional Economics</i>			1	28
van Staveren I.	Is it Ethnic Fractionalization or Social Exclusion, Which Affects Social Cohesion?	2017	<i>Social Indicators Research</i>	130		711	731
Costalli S.	The economic costs of civil war: Synthetic counterfactual evidence and the effects of ethnic fractionalization	2017	<i>Journal of Peace Research</i>	54	1	80	98
Andrianova S.	Ethnic Fractionalization, Governance and Loan Defaults in Africa	2017	<i>Oxford Bulletin of Economics and Statistics</i>				
Awaworyi Churchill S.	Ethnic Diversity and Poverty	2017	<i>World Development</i>				
Gaibulloev K.	Conflicts and domestic bank lending	2016	<i>Public Choice</i>	169	03-Apr	315	331
Bleaney M.	Ethnic diversity and conflict	2016	<i>Journal of Institutional Economics</i>			1	22
Bakkan H.A.	Unpacking ethnicity: Exploring the underlying mechanisms linking ethnic fractionalization and civil conflict	2016	<i>Peace and Conflict</i>	22	4	413	416
Churchill S.A.	Ethnic diversity and firm performance: Evidence from China's materials and industrial sectors	2016	<i>Empirical Economics</i>		1	21	

Wimmer A.	Is Diversity Detrimental? Ethnic Fractionalization, Public Goods Provision, and the Historical Legacies of Stateness	2016	<i>Comparative Political Studies</i>	49	11	1407	1445
Randazzo K.A.	Examining the Development of Judicial Independence	2016	<i>Political Research Quarterly</i>	69	3	583	593
Schleussner C.-F.	Armed-conflict risks enhanced by climate-related disasters in ethnically fractionalized countries	2016	<i>Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America</i>	113	33	9216	9221
Epifanio M.	The politics of targeted and untargeted counterterrorist regulations	2016	<i>Terrorism and Political Violence</i>	28	4	713	734
Acharya A.	Explaining causal findings without bias: Detecting and assessing direct effects	2016	<i>American Political Science Review</i>	110	3	512	529
Bleaney M.	State history, historical legitimacy and modern ethnic diversity	2016	<i>European Journal of Political Economy</i>	43		159	170
Simon P.	Heterogeneity in turnout rates across regions and the nationalization of party systems	2016	<i>Acta Politica</i>	51	2	173	193
Husmann C.	Marginality as a Root Cause of Poverty: Identifying Marginality Hotspots in Ethiopia	2016	<i>World Development</i>	78		420	435
Utomo A.	Who marries whom?: Ethnicity and marriage pairing patterns in Indonesia	2016	<i>Asian Population Studies</i>	12	1	28	49
Marcos-Marné H.	Conflict, identity and development in the democratization of the former yugoslav republics [Conflicto, identidad y desarrollo en la democratización de las ex repúblicas yugoslavas]	2016	<i>Revista Internacional de Sociología</i>	74	1	e027	
Kodila-Tedika O.	The effect of intelligence on financial development: A cross-country comparison	2015	<i>Intelligence</i>	51	1		

Japutra A.	A framework of brand strategy and the "glocalization" approach: The case of Indonesia	2015	<i>Analyzing the Cultural Diversity of Consumers in the Global Marketplace</i>			101	125
Bosworth R.	Willingness to pay for public health policies to treat illnesses	2015	<i>Journal of Health Economics</i>	39		74	88
Jensen C.	Democracy, ethnic fractionalisation, and the politics of social spending: Disentangling a conditional relationship	2015	<i>International Political Science Review</i>	36	4	457	472
Tusalem R.F.	Ethnic Minority Governments, Democracy, and Human Rights	2015	<i>Politics and Policy</i>	43	4	502	537
Kaufmann E.	Land, history or modernization? Explaining ethnic fractionalization	2015	<i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i>	38	2	193	210
Shimeles A.	The Making of the Middle-Class in Africa: Evidence from DHS Data	2015	<i>Journal of Development Studies</i>	51	2	178	193
Arifin E.N.	Quantifying Indonesia's Ethnic Diversity: Statistics at National, Provincial, and District levels	2015	<i>Asian Population Studies</i>				11
Kotera G.	Ethnic diversity, democracy, and health: Theory and evidence	2015	<i>Research in Economics</i>	69	3	353	376
Wang C.	Can Ethno-Linguistic Diversity Explain Cross-Country Differences in Social Capital?: A Global Perspective	2015	<i>Economic Record</i>	91	294	338	366
Kawalerowicz J.	Anarchy in the UK: Economic deprivation, social disorganization, and political grievances in the London riot of 2011	2015	<i>Social Forces</i>	94	2	673	698
Schaeffer M.	Ethnic diversity and social cohesion: Immigration, ethnic fractionalization and potentials for civic action	2014	<i>Ethnic Diversity and Social Cohesion: Immigration, Ethnic Fractionalization and Potentials for Civic Action</i>	1			
Rashkova E.R.	Ethnic heterogeneity and party system size: A district-level analysis	2014	<i>Comparative European Politics</i>	12	3	249	278
Casey G.P.	Inequality and Fractionalization	2014	<i>World Development</i>	56		32	50

Acosta-González E.	An empirical examination of the determinants of the shadow economy	2014	<i>Applied Economics Letters</i>	21	5	304	307
Cooray A.	Ethnic or Political Fractionalisation? A District Level Analysis of the Provision of Public Goods in Sri Lanka	2014	<i>Growth and Change</i>	45	4	640	666
Wegenast T.C.	Ethnic fractionalization, natural resources and armed conflict	2014	<i>Conflict Management and Peace Science</i>	31	4	432	457
Papyrakis E.	Fractionalization, polarization, and economic growth: Identifying the transmission channels	2014	<i>Economic Inquiry</i>	52	3	1204	1218
Kourtellos A.	Robust multiple regimes in growth volatility	2014	<i>Empirical Economics</i>	48	1	461	491
Kapidžić, D.	Ethnic practice in electoral politics: Bosnia and Herzegovina's 1990 Presidency elections	2014	<i>Journal of Southeast European and Black Sea</i>	14	4	556	584
Cunningham D.E.	Beyond Civil War: A Quantitative Examination of Causes of Violence within Countries	2014	<i>Civil Wars</i>	16	3	328	345
Toya H.	Do natural disasters enhance societal trust?	2014	<i>Kyklos</i>	67	2	255	279
Anyanwu J.C.	Does oil wealth affect democracy in Africa?	2014	<i>African Development Review</i>	26	1	15	37
Tusalem R.F.	Bringing the military back in: The politicisation of the military and its effect on democratic consolidation	2014	<i>International Political Science Review</i>	35	4	482	501
Freire D.	Between ballots and bullets: Executive competitiveness and civil war incidence, 1976-2000	2014	<i>Revista Espanola de Ciencia Politica</i>	1	36	35	62
Anyanwu J.C.	Oil Wealth, Ethno-Religious-Linguistic Fractionalization and Civil Wars in Africa: Cross-Country Evidence	2014	<i>African Development Review</i>	26	2	209	236
Gisselquist R.M.	Ethnic divisions and public goods provision, revisited	2014	<i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i>	37	9	1605	1627
Feigl A.B.	Evidenced formal coverage index and universal healthcare enactment: A prospective longitudinal study of economic, social, and political predictors of 194 countries	2013	<i>Health Policy</i>	113	01-Feb	50	60
Chu D.C.	The Role of the State on Cross-National Homicide Rates	2013	<i>International Criminal Justice Review</i>	23	3	252	279

Cole M.A.	Local exposure to toxic releases: Examining the role of ethnic fractionalization and polarisation	2013	<i>Ecological Economics</i>	93		249	259
Ayyagari M.	What determines protection of property rights? An analysis of direct and indirect effects	2013	<i>Journal of Financial Econometrics</i>	11	4	610	649
Fleck R.K.	When voice fails: Potential exit as a constraint on government quality	2013	<i>International Review of Law and Economics</i>	35		26	41
Cebotari V.	A configurational analysis of ethnic protest in Europe	2013	<i>International Journal of Comparative Sociology</i>	54	4	298	324
Pathak S.	A multi-level empirical study of ethnic diversity and shadow economy as moderators of opportunity recognition and entrepreneurial entry in transition economies	2013	<i>Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies</i>	15	3	240	259
Foster D.M.	There can be no compromise: Institutional inclusiveness, fractionalization and domestic terrorism	2013	<i>British Journal of Political Science</i>	43	3	541	557
Rohner D.	War signals: A theory of trade, trust, and conflict	2013	<i>Review of Economic Studies</i>	80	3	1114	1147
Lieberman E.S.	The Ethnicity-Policy Preference Link in Sub-Saharan Africa	2013	<i>Comparative Political Studies</i>	46	5	574	602
MacKenbach J.P.	A comparative analysis of health policy performance in 43 European countries	2013	<i>European Journal of Public Health</i>	23	2	195	201
Yamamura E.	Decomposition of ethnic heterogeneity on growth	2013	<i>Comparative Economic Studies</i>	55	1	59	75
Lindqvist E.	Identity and redistribution	2013	<i>Public Choice</i>	155	03-Apr	469	491
Papyrakis E.	Environmental Performance in Socially Fragmented Countries	2013	<i>Environmental and Resource Economics</i>	55	1	119	140
Jensen C.	Modernization, ethnic fractionalization, and democracy	2012	<i>Democratization</i>	19	6	1117	1137
Yamamura E.	The death toll from natural disasters: The role of income, geography and institutions: Comment	2012	<i>Economics Bulletin</i>	32	2	1545	1554
Selway J.	The Myth of Consociationalism? Conflict Reduction in Divided Societies	2012	<i>Comparative Political Studies</i>	45	12	1542	1571

Elbahnasawy N.G.	The Determinants of Corruption: Cross-Country-Panel-Data Analysis	2012	<i>Developing Economies</i>	50	4	311	333
Bertocchi G.	Growth, history, or institutions: What explains state fragility in sub-Saharan Africa?	2012	<i>Journal of Peace Research</i>	49	6	769	783
Feldmann H.	Ethnic fractionalization and unemployment	2012	<i>Economics Letters</i>	117	1	192	195
Skarbek D.	The industrial organization of street gangs	2012	<i>Journal of Gang Research</i>	20	1	1	17
Finseraas H.	Trust and Ethnic Fractionalization: The Importance of Religion as a Cross-Cutting Dimension	2012	<i>Kyklos</i>	65	3	327	339
Cerqueti R.	Corruption, growth and ethnic fractionalization: A theoretical model	2012	<i>Journal of Economics/ Zeitschrift fur Nationalokonomie</i>	106	2	153	181
Finseraas H.	Poverty, ethnic minorities among the poor, and preferences for redistribution in European regions	2012	<i>Journal of European Social Policy</i>	22	2	164	180
Sengupta J.	Caste and religious diversity on formation of social capital : A field survey in India and measurement issues	2012	<i>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</i>	31	2	158	175
Patsiurko N.	Measuring cultural diversity: ethnic, linguistic and religious fractionalization in the OECD	2012	<i>Ethnic and Racial Studies</i>	35	2	195	217
Hodler R.	Ethnic fractionalisation and aid effectiveness	2012	<i>Journal of African Economies</i>	21	1	65	93
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Rohner D.	Reputation, group structure and social tensions	2011	<i>Journal of Development Economics</i>	96	2	188	199
Akdede S.H.	Income inequality and voter fractionalisation: An empirical study of 16 multi-party European democracies	2011	<i>Australian Journal of Political Science</i>	46	3	425	436
David Mason T.	When Civil Wars Recur: Conditions for Durable Peace after Civil Wars	2011	<i>International Studies Perspectives</i>	12	2	171	189
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Campos N.F.	Dynamic ethnic fractionalization and economic growth	2011	<i>Journal of International Trade and Economic Development</i>	20	2	129	152
E. Alper Güvel E.A.	The socio-political dynamics of corruption: An analysis on the EU countries [Yolsuzluğun sosyo-politik dinamikleri: AB ülkeleri üzerine bir analiz]	2011	<i>Amme İdaresi Dergisi</i>	44	1	155	185
Selway J.S.	The measurement of cross-cutting cleavages and other multidimensional cleavage structures	2011	<i>Political Analysis</i>	19	1	48	65
Dev R.	Northeast India: Democracy, ethnic fractionalization, and competitive politics: The case of states in Northeast India	2011	<i>India's 2009 Elections: Coalition Politics, Party Competition and Congress Continuity</i>			355	393
Selway J.S.	Cross-cuttingness, cleavage structures and civil war onset	2011	<i>British Journal of Political Science</i>	41	1	111	138
Baggio J.A.	Ethnic diversity, property rights, and natural resources	2010	<i>Developing Economies</i>	48	4	473	495
Tan C.M.	No one true path: Uncovering the interplay between geography, institutions, and fractionalization in economic development	2010	<i>Journal of Applied Econometrics</i>	25	7	1100	1127
Selway J.S.	Cross-Cuttingness, Cleavage Structures and Civil War Onset	2010	<i>British Journal of Political Science</i>	1	28		
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Björkman M.	When is community-based monitoring effective? Evidence from a randomized experiment in primary health in Uganda	2010	<i>Journal of the European Economic Association</i>	8	02-Mar	571	581
Akdede S.H.	Do more ethnically and religiously diverse countries have lower democratization?	2010	<i>Economics Letters</i>	106	2	101	104
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Galbraith C.S.	The impact of ethnolinguistic diversity on entrepreneurial activity: A cross-country study	2009	<i>International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Small Business</i>	8	3	309	331
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Ayyagari M.	How well do institutional theories explain firms' perceptions of property rights?	2008	<i>Review of Financial Studies</i>	21	4	1833	1871
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Lieberman E.S.	Ethnic politics, risk, and policy-making: A cross-national statistical analysis of government responses to HIV/AIDS	2007	<i>Comparative Political Studies</i>	40	12	1407	1432
Butler C.K.	Security forces and sexual violence: A cross-national analysis of a principal-agent argument	2007	<i>Journal of Peace Research</i>	44	6	669	687
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