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THE PROBLEMS OF ASSESSING VALIDITY AND POLITICAL POTENTIAL OF CROSS-NATIONAL COMPARATIVE RATINGS

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<p>Article history:</p> <p><i>Received:</i> 22.02.2020</p> <p><i>Accepted:</i> 03.08.2020</p>	<p>Abstract: The article analyzes the heuristic potential of leading cross-country indices and ratings for comparative and institutional analysis of the Russian Federation and other countries of the world. The author proves that numerous comparative cross-country ratings and indices that have become extremely popular in social sciences in recent decades have transgressed the research framework and could influence the economy of various countries, their educational and scientific systems, external image, political agendas and legitimacy of political regimes.</p> <p>The author carries out a correlation analysis of positions of 145 countries in 16 comparative rating studies highly cited in social and political science and calculates the coefficient of their correlation with the positions of the Russian Federation. Additionally, the author compares the scores of 144 countries in the array of 16 ratings with the relevant indicators of the Russian Federation, which allowed to distinguish a group of countries showing maximum institutional identity with Russia, according to the compilers of the ratings. The author states that discovered correlations lack empirical evidence and convincing interpretation. At the same time, they are largely affected by political and ideological factors, as well as the effect of «image evaluation».</p> <p>The author concludes that the analyzed cross-country indices have considerable heuristic potential, but the patterns and correlations based solely on statistical analysis of their data, and, particularly, qualitative assessments, do not fully meet the criteria of obtaining new scientific knowledge and should be considered mainly as hypotheses that require additional causal substantiation and empirical verification. The article shows that mandatory hierarchy of representation inherent in the cross-country ratings creates the basis for their politicization and contradicts the contemporary reality that strives towards polymodality of the world order.</p>
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Problem definition

Foregrounding and mainstreaming of global cross-national political and institutional-comparative ratings in contemporary social science leaves no room for doubt. These indices evaluate and rate a wide-ranging group of countries according to different criteria and relying on various methodological principles: indices of political risk and stability, quality of public administration, state “fragility” and “substantiality”, development of democracy, freedom of speech and media, cultural appeal of nations, educational systems (academic ratings), gender equality, and other numerous benchmarks. The global expansion, institutionalization and

formalization of comparative social studies brought about the issue of limitless heuristic potential of cross-national ratings, which, in its turn, requires groundbreaking reinterpretation of major definitions in social and political science, as well as mainstream introduction of categories based on new validation criteria.

Large-scale and multi-criteria collation and generalization is only possible if different societies are potentially comparable. The greatest possible comparability can be established through determining common and preferential comparison parameters. In this regard, modern “rating revolution”,

which mainstreamed “in-lab” cross-national comparative rating projects, previously known to exclusively narrow groups of experts and based on universal paradigms, is of special investigatory interest.

It is also noteworthy that global ratings are developed not by individual scientists and independent research groups but, most commonly, by large organizations. In the ongoing “rating revolution”, it is primarily widely-quoted and media covered rating surveys that are coming to the foreground. Developed in the leading western countries and mainstreamed by the global mass media and non-governmental organizations, comparative ratings exert a growing influence (both factual and potential) on political decision-making, national policy guidelines, the motivation and behavior of the elites, scientific progress, institutional development, expert society, mass media and public opinion, global image of rated nations and even their economic and political stability.

The growing interest in cross-national ratings and indices is accounted for by their simplicity and convenience. The ratings’ data have the property of becoming entrenched in consciousness as something obvious, as the main advantage of a rating is its simplicity: it reduces a large amount of information to a symbol, which can be easily used as a manipulation tool.¹ This plainness is convenient, it is quickly taken as a given and allows not to delve into detail of the phenomena in question, creating, as was put by S.G. Kara-Murza, an

illusion of “effortless competence”.² In the face of existing overabundance of data in modern information society, comparative ratings offer a concise, focused, ready-made report, which does not require any further processing or additional analysis (the so-called “information shortcuts”). Thus, comparative indices data can be taken at face value without doubts and questioning and acquire characteristics of mythologized consciousness, becoming an element of “cultural hegemony” (as understood by A. Gramsci). In this respect, we suggest that rating organizations, while claiming to be politically unbiased, objective and positivistic, are nevertheless restrained by ideology-driven “false consciousness”. Usually they are implicitly Eurocentric and, consequently, dualistic, as they contrapose different groups of nations, associated with certain patterns.

The appeal of ratings is also premised on their alleged practical focus, as well as their importance as an objective tool for determining the world’s best practices and setting global benchmarks.³ Thus, cross-national comparative indices are closely related to international benchmarking. Benchmarking represents a comparative analysis based on certain model guidelines, i.e. it is the practice of comparing experiences, processes and institutions according to various standard indicators recognized by the experts as ideal with an outlook for their further implementation and adaptation. In recent decades, numerous organizations have been creating their own tools for “global benchmarking”, the latter being defined as “transnational practice used for control, assessment and performance improvement”.⁴

¹ As J. Kelley and B. Simmons wrote: “A column of numbers can be scanned in seconds, while reading the underlying reports on which they are based (which may or may not be translated into the local language) could take weeks. Most importantly, numbers facilitate comparisons among units and over time. They can also be averaged, thereby helping to establish ‘norms’ or ‘standards’ against which it becomes straightforward to compare different units. For these reasons, actors respond differently to ratings than to words alone”. Kelley, B.A.; Simmons, J.G. Politics by Number: Indicators as Social Pressure in International Relations // *American Journal of Political Science*, 2015, Vol. 59, No. 1, pp. 57-58. Mode of access: https://scholar.harvard.edu/files/bsimmons/files/kelleysimmons_politicsbynumber_ajps_2015.pdf

² Kara-Murza, S.G. Problemy sociologii ili otkuda berutsja rejtingi (1 chast) (The Problems of Sociology or Where Ratings Come from (Part 1)) / *Tochka.ru*. 02.04.2015. Mode of access: <http://tochka-py.ru/index.php/ru/glavnaya/entry/465-00105>

³ Centre for the Study of Globalisation and Regionalisation / Global Benchmarking Project. Mode of access: <http://www2.warwick.ac.uk/fac/soc/pais/research/researchcentres/csgr/benchmarking/project/>

⁴ Broome, A.; Homolar, A.; Kranke, M. Bad Science: International Organizations and the Indirect Power of Global Benchmarking // *European Journal of International Relations*, 2018, Vol. 24, Issue: 3, pp. 514-539.

Primarily regarded as hypotheses and speculations that required verification, cross-national comparative ratings are gradually becoming ontological reality, which is actively establishing a foothold in social sciences, getting a greater coverage in media and impacting important political and economic decision making,⁵ both nationally and globally, and is influencing public opinion in various countries of the world.

However, in order to legitimize global ratings and their methodology, it is necessary to accept the fundamental assumption that there exists consistent, global compatibility of different societies, based on universal standards, which can be easily formalized and quantified, and that these societies can be benchmarked in accordance with these standards. It is also worth mentioning that, in their assessment, as well as choosing criteria for comparison, the majority of rating organizations rely on the neoliberal paradigm. One should also remember that indices and ratings, in their essence, are agnoseological way of cognizing the social world and are based on a hierarchical principle.

Therefore, the question of legitimacy and validity of the most popular cross-national comparative-institutional rating surveys, as well as their political and heuristic potential, is of immediate current interest. Is it true that mainstream cross-country comparative ratings can shed new light on the evaluated and compared countries, pinpoint facts and patterns which are impossible to identify with the help of other research techniques? Also, to what extent will the comparative-institutional analysis, based on the data provided by the most popular

global indices, expand the understanding of the specific character proper to modern Russian political and social (particularly federal) institutions? Will it help determine which countries are most similar to Russia in regards to different parameters, both on a standalone and aggregate basis?

Methodology and empirical basis of the research

The key objective of this article is to, by means of the correlational analysis, assess the political potential of the cross-national comparative indices which have received the biggest coverage in social and political research in order to advance and verify mid-level theories and determine their validity for the institutional-comparative analysis in the Russian Federation and other countries.

It is common knowledge that the majority of comparative cross-national rating surveys do not engage into any “field research”, nor do they need to establish contact with the compared and evaluated objects. On the contrary, for the major part, comparative ratings use qualitative methods, mainly the opinions of anonymous experts, thus creating a type of their own reality based on cross-citation, i.e. using one another’s results and evaluations as the main references. As was fairly noted by the collaborative writing team supervised by Yu.A. Nisnevich, this is erroneous from the methodological point of view as “in order to provide a fair evaluation of the compared characteristics of a state one should only use indicators which have been determined as a result of political surveys conducted independently from one another”.⁶

In this regard, the current research focuses mostly on the large-scale, integrated and, as is expected, high-budget rating projects, which provide data for a wide range of other indices and comparative surveys.

⁵ Mennillo, G. Credit Rating Agencies in Asia: A Battle of Ideas / *IPSA Conference Proceedings Library. 2018 Brisbane - 25th World Congress (Borders and Margins)*. Mode of access: https://www.ipsa.org/my-ipsa/conference-proceedings-library/search?field_confproc_event_value=wc2018&field_confproc_sessions_target_id=&field_confproc_panel_value=&title=rating&combine=&session_storage_c2008=&session_storage_c2010=&session_storage_c2011=&session_storage_c2017=&session_storage_wc2006=&session_storage_wc2009=&session_storage_wc2012=&session_storage_wc2014=&session_storage_wc2016=&session_storage_wc2018=

⁶ Нисневич Ю.А. Индексы развития государств мира: справочник. М: Издательство НИУ ВШЭ, 2014. С. 13. [Indeksy razvitija gosudarstv mira: spravochnik. Pod red. Yu.A. Nisnevich (The Development Indices of the Countries of the World: A Handbook. Ed. by Yu.A. Nisnevich). Moscow: The Higher School of Economics Publishing House. 2014. P. 13.]

In order to assess the political potential of the modern “rating infrastructure” (priority given to the comparative analysis of Russia and other countries of the world) we have

conducted a correlational analysis of the ranks of 145 countries with a view to the position of Russia in 16 most popular cross-national political ratings, presented in *Table 1*.

Table 1.

**Cross-National Comparative Rating Projects Used in the Correlational Analysis
(Recent Available Data Analyzed: December 2017)**

Index Title	Parameter	Founder / Funding	Headquarter
Human Development Index	Human capital	UNDP	New York, the USA
ARWU	Higher education	Jiao Tong University / China government	Shanghai, China
Global Gender Gap Report	Gender equality	WEF / a number of American and European corporations	Geneva, Switzerland
Doing Business	Business climate	World Bank	Washington, the USA
State Fragility Index	State fragility	Center for Systemic Peace, CIA	Vienna, the USA
BTI: Democracy	Democratic freedoms and institutions	Bertelsmann Foundation, government of Germany	Guterslo, Germany
BTI: Management	Quality of public administration	Bertelsmann Foundation, government of Germany	Guterslo, Germany
Corruption Perception Index	Level of corruption	Transparency International / Netherlands MFA, USAID, EC, Ernst& Young LPP, and other donors	Berlin, Germany
Govindicators: “Government Effectiveness”	Government Effectiveness	World Bank	Washington, the USA
Govindicators: “Voice and Accountability”	Freedom of speech and accountability of officials	World Bank	Washington, the USA
Govindicators: “Political Stability and Absence of Violence”	Political Stability	World Bank	Washington, the USA
Fragile States Index	Stability, capability of the state	The Fund for Peace / Foreign Policy / Graham Holdings Company and many other sponsors	Washington, the USA
Freedom of the Press	Media freedom	Freedom House / the US government	Washington, the USA
World Press Freedom Index	Media freedom	Reporters sans frontières / government of France, USAID, Sanofi-Aventis and others	Paris, France
Global Peace Index	Peace and security	Institute for Economics and Peace / information is not available	Sydney / New York, Australia / the US
Democracy index	Level of democracy	The Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU) / The Economist Group (Cadbury, Rothschild, Schroder, Agnelli, Layton and others	London, the UK

As is obvious, the selected ratings, which undoubtedly belong to the category of the most well-known and widely-covered comparative surveys, are well illustrative, as they include almost all countries of the world, are calculated annually or bi-annually and comprehensively evaluate and compare key social institutions and parameters (political stability, democracy

level, “substantiality” of the state, the quality of human capital assets, business environment, level of education, gender equality, freedom of speech, safety, corruption, etc.).

At the same time, as was illustrated in *Table 1*, the strong interrelation between the majority of the rating projects and political and business entities from a narrow group of countries,

Table 2.

Countries with the Highest Coefficient of Correlation to Russia’s Positions, Based on the 2017 Data of 16 Popular Cross-National Political Ratings, Presented Highest (Left) to Lowest (Right)

Country	r
Azerbaijan	0,953
C North Korea	0,937
Thailand	0,936
North Macedonia	0,930
Mexico	0,916
Iran	0,875
Armenia	0,872
Uzbekistan	0,858
Kazakhstan	0,853
Belorussia	0,850
Bahrain	0,840
China	0,825
Ukraine	0,823
Egypt	0,815
Tajikistan	0,812
Turkmenia	0,805
Lebanon	0,795
Greece	0,793

providing financial and informational support, allows to classify them not only as exclusively research projects but also as active and potential agents of economic and political influence.

The correlational analysis conducted in the research also tests the hypothesis that rankings of the countries perceived as “adversaries” in the western political and expert community have to be closely positioned. In this connection, the article’s further interests involve a consecutive assessment of Russia’s rankings and their comparison with the positions of certain countries that are looked upon as “outsiders”.

At the first stage of the research, we collected the data presented by 16 main political comparative indices, which ranked the positions of 145 countries of the world.⁷ During the data compilation, we focused on the indicators documented in 2017.

Further on, using Microsoft Excel, we calculated the coefficient of correlation between Russia’s rankings and those of 144 countries and determined the countries with the highest coefficient. In case a country was omitted from certain ratings (which is quite typical with smaller and insular nations), we compared its positions with Russia’s rankings based solely on the remaining bulk of data. The results of the analysis have shown that, according to the information presented in the rating surveys, the closest countries to Russia are Azerbaijan (>0,95), North Korea (>0,93), Thailand (>0,93), North Macedonia (>0,93), Mexico (0,916), Iran (0,875), Armenia (0,872) and, to a lesser degree, a number of other states (see *Table 2*).

In order to confirm the estimations, at the next stage, we supplemented the correlation coefficient

data with yet another variable – a notional total score for each country according to its position in all ratings combined. On basis of the total score, we also introduced a synthetic indicator, which would determine a country’s correlation to Russia’s indices (Russia’s score was set equal to 1).

Key findings of the research

The calculation results showed that the maximum “institutional similarity” to Russia was demonstrated by the countries arranged highest to lowest in *Table 2*. The total scores of the most countries analyzed deviate from Russia’s score by the maximum of 10-15 per cent, which proves their basic equivalence to Russia from the point of view of most rating surveys. Of all the European states analyzed, Macedonia proved to be the closest to Russia, followed by Greece. Among South American countries, Peru showed the greatest similarity to Russian indices.

The above calculations eloquently confirm our hypothesis about the unapparent (i.e. not reflected in the methodology) “clustering” of a number of countries according to ideological and political criteria. Thus, for example, such essentially different states as Russia, Iran and North Korea, are viewed in the majority of the cross-national ratings as strikingly similar nations with basically identical institutions.

Thus, we can see that the potential of large-scale cross-cultural comparisons and generalizations based on political rating surveys is quite limited. It is apparent that the “similarity” of a group of countries pointed out in *Table 3* cannot be satisfyingly accounted for by objective factors: geographic, historical, civilizational, economic, demographic and others.

⁷ Ranks are available for free download as an Excel file at: https://yadi.sk/i/a8IN0i_jkMrr6w

Table 3.

Countries of the World, Demonstrating Closest Similarity to Russia’s indices, on Basis of the 2017 Data of 16 Popular Cross-National Political Ratings, Positioned Highest to Lowest

Country	Azerbaijan	Thailand	Bahrain	China	Mexico	Saudi Arabia	Lebanon	Armenia, Uzbekistan, Ukraine	Iran, Kazakhstan, Belorussia, Turkmenia	North Korea	Egypt	Tajikistan
The RF												

The task to work out a convincing and equally casual interpretation of this alleged “similarity”, presented in the rating surveys, seems rather sophisticated and, among other things, counterproductive. At the same time, it can be easily explained by political, ideological and informational factors, as well as by less than perfect methodological tools applied in certain projects and surveys.

As was justly noted by O.V. Gaman-Golutvina, “the amalgamation of essentially different countries as separate analysis units can result in ultimately biased data”.⁸ Therefore, taking into consideration that we have been analyzing the most popular, high-profile and big-budget surveys, it is evident that the assumption about the limited validity and research potential of a number of rating projects (and, consequently, international benchmarks based on their findings) has been proven true. It all adds up to the conclusion that, in numerous instances, political research indices unite various states in groups based on “us vs. them” criterion rather than objectively compare different countries’ institutional infrastructure.

Additionally, we have conducted a correlational analysis of different variables used in a number of ratings with the purpose of determining how those coefficients interrelate. For instance, indices “Democracy”

and “Governance” presented by Bertelsmann Transformation Index, show the correlation coefficient of more than 0.9, which indicates a high level of ideological bias and determinacy of the rating in question (which is openly admitted by its authors). Indices “Voice and Accountability” and “Political Stability and Absence of Violence” of the World Bank Institute rating demonstrate a slightly smaller level of conformity, with the correlation coefficient of 0.75.

It is worth mentioning that the experiment, described in the article, can be easily re-conducted. At the same time, speaking of the validity of the analyzed rating projects, one should keep in mind the famous Duhem-Quine thesis, according to which it is impossible to arrive at the “unequivocal experiment”, capable of either validating or disproving a certain scientific hypothesis.

In our opinion, among the most accredited, objective and, consequently, legitimate present-day index surveys, one could name, in the first place, rating projects initiated and developed under the auspices of the UNO (for example, HDI). On the other hand, the conducted analysis has brought us to the conclusion that, in the totality of the comparative surveys analyzed, it is political indices and various “indices of freedom” that show the least degree of validity. What is more, their flaws are accounted for not only by their high level of political and ideological orientation, which is bound to affect the conclusions and results, but also by their unreliable methodology, based on holistic and universalistic principles, as well as presentism.

⁸ Сравнительная политология. Под ред. О.В. Гаман-Голутвиной. М.: Аспект-Пресс, 2015. С. 96. [Srvavnitel'naja politologija. Pod red. O.V. Gaman-Golutvina (Comparative Politics. Ed. by O.V. Gaman-Golutvina). Moscow: Aspect-Press. 2015. P. 96.]

Interestingly, the corresponding comparative analyses of state institutions are frequently conducted without any consideration of the context in which those institutions were created. More often than not, nations cannot be compared on the basis of universalistic and essentialist principles of classification, as this method of comparison artificially disguises and cushions real social and political processes presently taking place in different countries rather than offers actual knowledge, which could facilitate understanding of the broad spectrum of state and social institutions, and thus, proves to be heuristically counterproductive. One can clearly witness the effect, which American political scientist Shapiro called disconnection between interpretation and reality, or “method-oriented approach”, often fraught with alienation from the object of comparison and investigation.⁹

The question about criteria for comparison remains critically controversial as well: Should all objects in the aggregate be compared and ranked according to one individual criterion or to a group of various criteria? The choice preference in case with single-criterion and multi-criteria comparisons determines future trends of rating evolution. If a single criterion is preferred, the risk of biased results decreases, however, the cumulative effect of the collected data, both heuristic and political-informational, is lost as well.

Limitations of cumulative research potential of the leading cross-national ratings, revealed in the article, indicate that in many cases single variables can tell more about the object of investigation than multiple criteria applied together. Indeed, the so-called “comprehensive” or “mixed” ratings are often prone to “juggling” data and overgeneralization of variables, artificially played up to match the targeted results. At the same time, numerous supporters of popular index ratings claim that a combined rating with a slant towards quality assessment can give a much better idea about a country or a political regime than comparison of individual quantitative parameters. Therefore, they believe, broad generalizations are reasonable.

⁹ Shapiro, I. *The Flight from Reality in the Human Sciences*. (Russ. ed.: Shapiro, I. *Begstvo ot real'nosti v gumanitarnykh naukakh*. Moscow: The Higher School of Economics Publishing House. 2011. 368 p.)

In modern comparative studies, development of leading political rating projects has been carried out primarily with the use of the deductive method. It has been based on the leading paradigms of western political and social science, many of which have become outdated and need to be revised. Politicization of ratings, which takes place immediately after a rating becomes globally famous, is viewed by the authors as a negative tendency. Without a doubt, it is still too early to attribute this tendency to a certain “iron law” which would account for its emergence. However, monitoring and assessment of the rating projects proper (primarily by the academic community and social organizations) is becoming a high priority objective.

Nevertheless, one cannot help but admit that the quality of ratings is improving, although many research projects make do with an extensive way of comparison: they increase the number of comparison criteria and variables. As they do this, they frequently decrease the validity of the comparative surveys by using more of qualitative assessment and cross-citation. One can also observe gradual evolution and betterment of theoretical concepts, which are developed with the use of empirical database of the rating surveys. In particular, one can make notice of certain specification, mitigation and redefinition of the most essentialist, controversial and politicized criteria and notions. For example, the notion of the “failed states” (among which one could often find nations with more than a thousand years of history), highly vulnerable from scientific and political points of view but strongly lobbied by certain ratings, is gradually being transformed into “fragile states” or “states of fragility”.¹⁰

Conclusions

One can say that the major flaws of comparative cross-national ratings are very similar to the flaws of the standard qualitative and quantitative methods of social and political research. The Duhem-Quine principle of “holistic under-determinacy”, as well as the methodological problem of external validity of comparative

¹⁰ Bartenev, V.I. 2017. From ‘Failed States’ to ‘States of Fragility’: Logic of Conceptual Acrobatics // *Polis. Political Studies*, 2017, No. 2, pp. 26-41.

surveys (projection of identified relations between variables to a broader spectrum of phenomena), point to the limited heuristic and interpretational potential of comparative cross-national ratings. It is apparent that currently there are no comparative ratings that are characterized by sufficient validity to serve as a basis for building an average-level theory. Ideological monism, characteristic of the majority of mainstream rating projects, is a systematic methodological defect present in the corresponding surveys and the knowledge generated by them. It is particularly obvious in the case of Russia, which does not fit in the popular essentialist models and standards that pretend to be universal.

As is known, a research conducted with the help of comparative-institutional analysis must be open to free information access and re-conductible, as is required by general scientific rules of producing new knowledge. Unfortunately, few of the modern index projects objectively meet these criteria. Great significance attached to expert opinions in a lot of comparative ratings, as well as widespread cross-citation allow plenty of room for possible manipulation of results. The comparative-institutional study of Russia versus other countries, based on the correlational analysis and the recent data of numerous popular index-rating projects, has shown that many of these ratings (primarily political indices and “indices of freedom”) demonstrate a tendency for unjustified generalizations and labelling countries as “friend vs. foe”, which inevitably decreases research potential of these surveys.

Moreover, the conducted experiment has revealed that cross-national ratings also reflect the idea of “civilizational similarity”, the way it is perceived by those who compile the ratings on the basis of closeness of the countries’ cultural traditions. For instance, this accounts for the fact why many western combined ratings place Russia very far from European countries, basically on the opposite end of the hypothetical scale.

Russia’s example, especially in the context of its current confrontation with the USA, clearly demonstrates the standpoint of a number of rating organizations (in particular, those located on the territory of the United States and Great Britain and funded by the governments and various federal organizations). Their intention is

to fit Russia’s image in the ready-made artificial model, which was clearly communicated by former US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright: “Russia is a Bangladesh with missiles”.¹¹

Thus, modern popular cross-national ratings go outside the framework of scientific research and aspire to become self-sufficient and reputable standards of truth, although, objectively, they have no convincing and legitimate reasons for such aspirations (especially when their politicized and manipulative component has been debunked and is openly acknowledged). Instead of serving their basic function of searching and prompting models and references in various spheres, ratings are increasingly transforming into a leverage. Leading ratings are characterized by politicization, instrumentalism and commercialization, which is allowed by the modern reality, falsely entertaining a possibility of universal standards, models and values. The pointed out flaws of modern index-rating projects do not override their significance as an indispensable research tool which has an enormous potential.

In this context, comparative assessment of existing rating projects according to the criteria of trustworthiness, validity, objectivity and compliance with ethical standards, is increasingly gaining importance.

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¹¹ Albright: “Putin Ist Smart, aber ein Wirklich Böser Mensch” / *DiePresse.com*, 18.04.2016. Mode of access: http://diepresse.com/home/politik/aussenpolitik/4970184/Albright_Putin-ist-smart-aber-ein-wirklich-boser-Mensch?_vl_backlink=/home/politik/index.do

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ПРОБЛЕМЫ ОЦЕНКИ ВАЛИДНОСТИ И ГОСУДАРСТВОВЕДЧЕСКОГО ПОТЕНЦИАЛА СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫХ МЕЖСТРАНОВЫХ ИНДЕКСОВ

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<p>Информация о статье: <i>Поступила в редакцию:</i> 22 мая 2020 <i>Принята к печати:</i> 3 августа 2020</p>	<p>Аннотация: В статье анализируется эвристический потенциал ведущих межстрановых индексо-рейтинговых исследований для сопоставительно-институционального анализа Российской Федерации и других стран мира. Автором был проведен корреляционный анализ позиций 145 стран мира в 16 наиболее цитируемых в социологии и политологии сравнительных рейтинговых исследованиях для того, чтобы определить коэффициент их корреляции с позициями РФ. Предпринятый анализ был дополнен сопоставлением оценок 144 стран в рассматриваемом массиве рейтингов с соответствующими показателями РФ, что позволило выделить группу стран демонстрирующих, по мнению составителей рейтингов, максимальную институциональную идентичность с Россией. Однако выявленные корреляции не обнаруживают эмпирического подтверждения и убедительной интерпретации, а выявленная «близость» к России ряда стран мира в значительной степени обуславливается политическими и идеологическими факторами, а также эффектом «имиджевой оценки». На основе полученных результатов в статье сделан вывод об ограниченности эвристического потенциала рассмотренного массива межстрановых рейтинговых исследований.</p> <p>Автор приходит к выводам о том, что популярные в современной политической науке сравнительные государственоведческие индексы обладают значительным эвристическим потенциалом, однако закономерности и корреляции, выявленные на основе статистического анализа их данных, и, особенно, качественных оценок, не в полной мере соответствуют критериям получения нового научного знания и могут рассматриваться преимущественно в качестве гипотез, требующих дополнительной каузальной обоснования и эмпирической верификации. Обязательная иерархичность репрезентации, присущая рейтингам, создает основания для их политизации и не вполне соответствует современной реальности, демонстрирующей поливариантность и полимодальность мирового развития.</p>
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<p>Ключевые слова: межстрановые рейтинги; сравнительные индексы; политические институты; состоятельность государства; сравнительный анализ; валидность; корреляционный анализ; мягкая сила</p>	

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