Measuring Election Administration

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March 20, 2013
Outline

• Conceptual framework
• Data sources
• Elections Performance Index (17 measures)
  • Where Missouri ranks in 2008
• Challenges in measuring election administration
• Some measure of success
  • Impact of new voting equipment
Data Sources

- Surveys of voters
  - Survey of the Performance of American Elections (SPAE)
  - Current Population Survey (CPS)
- Administrative data from election offices
  - Election Administration and Voting Surveys (EAVS)
- Surveys of election officials
## Conceptual Framework

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions/Value</th>
<th>Registering Voters</th>
<th>Casting Ballots</th>
<th>Counting Votes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Measurement challenge: Competing values**

Registrations Rejected (Item 12)

- Indicates barriers to proper voter registration
- May indicate attempted fraud

- Missouri rank: ? (incomplete data)

Measurement challenge: Missing data
Federalism and Election Administration

- Limited role for national government
  - HAVA passed in 2002
    - Money for new voting equipment
    - Other requirements for states
    - Creation of Election Assistance Commission (EAC)
  - VRA (1965) and NVRA (1993) may be trimmed by the Supreme Court this term.
- State and local governments manage elections in the United States (over 7,000 local jurisdictions).
Jurisdiction Size Categories

• Small: Less than 1,000 ballots cast in a presidential election
  • Official is similar to a school principal
• Medium: Between 1,000 and 50,000 voters
  • Similar to managing fast-food franchises
• Large: Over 50,000 voters
  • Official is similar to a CEO
Number of Jurisdictions (2008)

Source: Kimball & Baybeck, forthcoming
Number of Voters by Size (2008)

Source: Kimball & Baybeck, forthcoming
Share of Ballots Cast in Each Size Category: 2010 Election

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ballot Type</th>
<th>Small</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Large</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total ballots</td>
<td>0.3%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Election Day ballots</td>
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Source: 2010 Election Administration and Voting Survey
## Share of Ballots Cast in Each Size Category: 2010 Election

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisional ballots cast</td>
<td>0.02%</td>
<td>8.9%</td>
<td>91.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisional ballots rejected</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
<td>86.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisionals partly accepted</td>
<td>none</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>98.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provisionals accepted in full</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
<td>8.7%</td>
<td>91.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: 2010 Election Administration and Voting Survey
Voting Wait Time (Item 17)

Measurement challenge: State rankings mask huge diversity within states.

Missouri (25.9 min.)
Voter turnout (Item 13)

- Missouri rank: 8th (69.1% in 2008)

- How many voters were there? What states report:
  - Voters checked in poll book
  - Total ballots cast
  - Votes cast in top contest on the ballot (MO)

Measurement challenge: Lack of common definitions
Provisional Ballots Cast (Item 9)

- Missouri rank: 15th (0.2% in 2008)

- Is it better to have many provisional ballots or few?

Measurement challenge: Lack of benchmarks
Overall EPI Rankings

- Missouri rank: 10th (73% in 2008)

Measurement challenge:
Election administration does not equal the sum of its parts.
Measurement Success: Voting Technology Accuracy (Item 16)

- Residual vote rate
  - Difference between total ballots cast and valid votes cast for president (as % of ballots cast)
- Benchmark in presidential elections (below 1%)
- Residual vote rate in 2000 (before new equipment): 1.8%
- Residual vote rate after new equipment
  - 2004: 1.1%
  - 2008: 1.1%
- Most of the decline due to new voting equipment
Residual Votes by Median County Income

Source: Kropf and Kimball, 2012
Summary

- Questions?
- dkimball@umsl.edu
- http://www.umsl.edu/~kimballd/dk_vote.htm
- Thank you!