

## **Brown, G. K., and Langer, A. “Conceptualizing and Measuring Ethnicity”**

(Abstract)

Although widely studied by anthropologists and political scientists alike, ethnicity and, by extension, ethnic groups and ethnic diversity remain highly contested concepts. In quantitative analyses, the standard for these concepts is seen in the Ethno-Linguistic Fractionalization (ELF) dataset, which is often used by scholars and authors for quantifying ethnic diversity. However, ELF has many limitations such as inaccurate data and the incorporation of irrelevant assumptions in its calculations, thereby misleading users into deriving unseemly results.

This paper reviews the range of measures of ethnicity available in the quantitative literature, including ‘pure’ measures that quantify ethnic diversity alone and ‘synthetic’ measures that incorporate information on ethnic diversity with other variables such as socio-economic positions and political access. By using these measures, we can also analyze such concepts as Horizontal Inequality and economic polarization. While the various measures purport to capture very different relationships between ethnic diversity and dependent variables such as conflict and economic growth, however, empirical testing suggests that different measures often produce very highly correlated results. The paper hence cautions that we must be very careful in using such measures to draw causal conclusions about the link between ethnic diversity, growth and conflict.