

SUBJECTIVE QUANTITATIVE STUDIES OF HUMAN AGENCY

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We do not grow absolutely, chronologically. We grow sometimes in one dimension, and not in another, unevenly. We grow partially. We are relative. We are mature in one realm, childish in another.
The Diary of Anais Nin, 1944–1947.

ABSTRACT

Amartya Sen's writings have articulated the importance of human agency, and identified the need for information on agency freedom to inform our evaluation of social arrangements. Many approaches to poverty reduction stress the need for empowerment. This paper reviews subjective quantitative measures of human agency at the individual level. It introduces large-scale cross-cultural psychological studies of self-direction, of autonomy, of self-efficacy, and of self-determination. Such studies and approaches have largely developed along an independent academic path from economic development and poverty reduction literature, yet may be quite significant in crafting appropriate indicators of individual empowerment or human agency. The purpose of this paper is to note avenues of collaborative enquiry that might be fruitful to develop.

INTRODUCTION

Quite a few studies indicate that durable poverty reduction or enduring social change occurs when some poor persons, as well as others in their society, participate actively in development processes. Such is the strength of this finding that it has become a truism to advocate the 'participation' and 'empowerment' of persons in many dimensions – such as women's empowerment within the household and labour force, or the empowerment of parents to hold school teachers accountable, or the inculcation of democratic practices such that communities and marginalized groups are able to articulate political demands and make their voices heard.

In Amartya Sen's work, the term 'human agency' represents people's ability to act on behalf of goals that matter to them, and this aspect of freedom, he argues, is a core ingredient of positive social change. "The people have to be seen . . . as being actively involved – given the opportunity – in shaping their own destiny, and not just as passive recipients of the fruits of cunning development programs."²

To the measurement minded, human agency seems surrounded by a mystique of undefinability. Yet 'quantitative' or survey-based measures of agency,³ in the sense of people's self-evaluation of whether or not they are free to act as agents, is by no means uncharted empirical territory. Some such measures seem to be comparable and robust across cultures.

This paper begins by introducing Amartya Sen's concept of agency, as well as the term 'empowerment', and by explaining why the psychological measures of agency may be relevant to it. It also articulates a problem with measuring agency as if it were only one dimension of well-being among others. The paper then surveys three subjective measures of human agency considered as a domain of well-being (Schwartz, Welzel/Inglehart, Ryff) and two other multidomain measures of agency (Self-Efficacy Theory, and Self-Determination Theory). The measures reflect people's perceptions of their autonomy, and in some cases their subjective evaluations of the importance of agency. The measures surveyed are introduced in Table II.

The studies and approaches here surveyed have developed along an independent academic path from economics or development literature. Yet the survey instruments, and the research on the nature of subjective quantitative data, may be useful in crafting subjective indicators of individual agency or empowerment. As leading researchers have observed, “the research effort is highly redundant” because different groups (including economists and those working in development) have begun to undertake subjective studies without properly reviewing the literature and techniques. Hence the purpose of this paper is to put some literature on the radar screen of those engaged in multidimensional measures of poverty, or quality of life, or capability expansion. The hope is that a preliminary conversation between disciplines might help to clarify and advance measurement options both in the capability approach and in development practice.

HUMAN AGENCY

Sen’s well-known Dewey Lectures, “Well-being, Agency, and Freedom,” articulate “a moral approach that sees persons from two different perspectives: well-being and agency. Both the “well-being aspect” and the “agency aspect” of persons have their own relevance in the assessments of states and actions. Each also yields a corresponding notion of freedom.”⁴

Sen defines agency freedom as “what a person is free to do and achieve in pursuit of whatever goals or values he or she regards as important.”⁵ The agency aspect is important “in assessing what a person can do in line with his or her conception of the good.”⁶ Unlike well-being, which refers to the person’s own state, agency is general; it is “not tied to any one type of aim. Agency freedom is freedom to achieve whatever the person, as a responsible agent, decides he or she should achieve.” Sen argues that “Persons should enter the moral accounting by others not only as people whose well-being demands concern, but also as people whose responsible agency must be recognised.”⁷

Agency may be exercised at the individual level, or in groups, or through democratic participation. For example Dréze and Sen directly identify participation as an expression of agency, and argue that it can have intrinsic value:

Participation also has intrinsic value for the quality of life. Indeed being able to do something not only for oneself but also for other members of the society is one of the elementary freedoms which people have reason to value. The popular appeal of many social movements in India confirms that this basic capability is highly valued even among people who lead very deprived lives in material terms.⁸

In addition to intrinsic importance and instrumental value Sen argues that joint forms of agency also have constructive importance because the information and perspectives people exchange can change their values and preferences: “the practice of democracy gives citizens an opportunity to learn from one another, and helps society to form its values and priorities. . In this sense, democracy has constructive importance.”⁹ He cites the example of declining fertility rates, which have been “much influenced by public discussion of the bad effects of high fertility rates on the community at large and especially on the lives of young women.”¹⁰

An ‘informational analysis’ of Sen’s own work would lead to the conclusion that information on human agency – whether agency is exercised individually or together with others – is indeed required for an adequate assessment of social arrangements.¹¹ But how do we obtain this information? Can we measure expansions in agency in a sensitive and policy-relevant manner? Before addressing this question, we pause briefly to acknowledge a related concept.

EMPOWERMENT

The term 'empowerment' is not one that Sen's capability approach often employs. But it is related to, although not synonymous with, an increase in human agency. The measures surveyed here may pertain to empowerment, a term that is currently used in poverty reduction efforts.

The World Development Report 2000/1 draws attention to the "sense of voiceless and powerlessness" poor persons highlighted when they discussed social and public institutions. "Those materially deprived feel acutely their lack of voice, power, and independence."¹² The words 'sense of' and 'feel' suggest that empowerment refers to person's own judgments and recurrent emotional states. Furthermore, the Voices of the Poor study and participatory poverty assessments like it rely on people's own definitions of powerlessness and voicelessness. Hence one aim of poverty reduction, these argue, might be to improve these subjective self-evaluations or perceptions so that in a later round of meetings persons report an increase in empowerment. Such an increase would have an intrinsic value and would also enable communities to advance their own concerns effectively. This aspect of empowerment could similarly be analysed using subjective indicators of human agency.

Empowerment is never defined conceptually or directly in the World Development Report 2000/1 but rather operationally. The paragraph that introduces empowerment in the framework for action is as follows:

Empowerment means enhancing the capacity of poor people to influence the state institutions that affect their lives, by strengthening their participation in political processes and local decision-making. And it means removing the barriers – political, legal, and social – that work against particular groups and building the assets of poor people to enable them to engage effectively in markets.¹³

This definition suggests that a considerable part of empowerment measurement and evaluation will be associated with the discrete elements of political processes, awareness-raising, decentralisation, legal structures, democracy, and so forth that are instrumentally effective in a particular situation. Thus measures of empowerment could reflect the instrumental strength of agency in the relevant spheres.

Sen argues that well-being and agency are distinctive, and both of intrinsic value. Earlier I have argued, following Finnis, Nussbaum, and others, that insofar as agency is of intrinsic value, it can be considered to be one dimension of human well-being.¹⁴ Thus it can appear in the 'Dimensions of well-being' column (Table I, page 223). Yet active agents are able to affect their ability to enjoy other dimensions of well-being more fully, so agency may also be a cause of well-being. But person A's agency is not limited to person A's well-being but may advance other aspects of his or her conception of the good (saving the seals or changing a government policy to be more equitable). Further, Sen points out that agency can also conflict with aspects of well-being. For example, a drowning child in the river beside which one is having a picnic causes one's agency freedom to expand by giving one the occasion to save the child's life – which one deems a worth-while project. But that same occasion may reduce one's actual well-being in other respects (by making one cold and wet and worried if one dives in) and also one's well-being freedom (as one is not free to finish one's lunch in peace).¹⁵ Thus the relationship between well-being and agency is complex and they are best studied independently.

Given the diverse conceptions of empowerment, no attempt was made to choose one. However in many definitions, empowerment is an increase in certain kinds of agency that are deemed particularly instrumental to the situation at hand. For example, the World Bank's

‘empowerment sourcebook’ identified four activities (listed under empowerment in Table I) that were, in their view, preconditions for empowerment, and also activities that development agencies could proactively advance. Thus I am choosing to assume that empowerment is a subset of agency, and that increases in empowerment would be reflected in increased agency (but not necessarily vice versa).

SUBJECTIVE AGENCY MEASURES

This paper limits its focus to self-reported or “subjective” studies of human agency. Subjective measures might be anticipated to complement rather than replace objective proxy measures of agency (examples of proxies are the educational attainments of one’s parents, or income over which women have decisive spending authority).¹⁶

The subjective studies here reviewed have several identifying characteristics.¹⁷ First, they reflect the internal experience of the respondent – including their own judgements and values about how well they are functioning in various dimensions. Second, they may include positive as well as negative experiences. Third, they focus on enduring evaluations rather than fleeting emotional states (a different literature focuses on fleeting happiness¹⁸). These aspects of subjective well-being studies make them particularly appropriate for engaging with the capability approach, which stresses practical reason and seeks information on valuable states of being and doing, which may be distinct from transitory states of emotional bliss.

Clearly, as Diener and Suh’s introduction to their excellent collection Culture and Subjective Well-Being points out, the methodological issues for comparable research (whether

Table 1

Well-Being	Agency	Empowerment
Aspects of people’s lives that they value and have reason to value.	People’s ability to act on behalf of what matters to them	A subset of agency , that focuses on the instrumental value of agency.
<i>Some Dimensions of Well-being:</i> ¹⁹	<i>Characteristics of Agency:</i>	<i>Methods to increase empowerment:</i>
Life/health/security Understanding Excellence in Work and Play Self-Direction or Practical Reason (Agency) Friendship and affiliation Inner Peace/Self-integration Creative Expression Spirituality / Harmony with sources of meaning and value Harmony with the natural world	is part of one’s own well-being (<i>intrinsic value</i>) - can cause positive changes in some dimensions of one’s well-being (<i>instrumental value</i>) ²⁰ - can create further changes one values (<i>instrumental value</i>) - may conflict with other dimensions of one’s well-being	Access to information, Participation/inclusion, Accountability, Local organizational capacity ²¹

participatory or survey in method) on subjective or self-reported data across multiple cultures are momentous.²² Are qualitative scales comparable across individuals? Are they comparable across societies? How does one aggregate data for samples that include multilingual, or literate and illiterate populations? What measurement artefacts are introduced by translation into different languages and by the associated need to translate concepts across cultures? What self-

report artefacts are introduced in cultures that value humility rather than overt success, or teamwork rather than individual gain?

A further hoard of issues surround the causality of subjective states, and are important in situations where policy-responsive indicators are required. Do subjective indicators track deliberate changes in agency outcomes better (or differently) than proxy indicators such as parents' education, women's employment, and so on? And how do we assess the margins of error (created by, for example, the impact of current events, of moods, of the impression given by facilitator or enumerator, and other transient, situational factors, on responses)? Can subjective data accurately track long term trends in agency expansion?

Fifteen years into research on subjective well-being, methodologies for checking data characteristics such as the cross-cultural comparability of subjective scales have been developed; at least preliminary studies (over 3000) have been completed, substantial survey articles and collective volumes are appearing, and some findings appear robust. While this paper focuses on conceptual matters, the measures surveyed in this paper could not be accurately deployed without these methodological tools and background studies.

AGENCY AS A DIMENSION OF WELL-BEING

Agency measures may be broadly divided into two types: those that view agency as one dimension among others of human well-being, and those that consider agency with respect to different dimensions of well-being. Broadly speaking, with respect to Table 1, the first measures look at the 'well-being' column; the second measures look at the 'agency' column.

While perhaps the most visible of subjective well-being studies conceives of subjective well-being as a whole, another avenue of well-being and quality-of-life research measures different 'domains' of multidimensional well-being. That is, the surveys collect information on a number of different dimensions of well-being, and may or may not later provide weighted aggregates for overall well-being. Researchers may also study intercorrelations between objective and subjective data on the same dimension.

Aspects of human agency are often, although by no means always, included in multidimensional accounts of well-being, whether these be philosophical or empirical. So John Finnis refers to practical reason or authentic self-direction; Martha Nussbaum refers to practical reason and control over one's environment; Doyal and Gough to autonomy; Max-Neef to participation; Ryan and Deci to autonomy; Narayan et al to freedom of choice and action; Schwartz to self-direction; Galtung to being an active subject; Allardt to self-determination; Andrews and Withey to independence; Lasswell to power; Qizilbash to autonomy or self-determination.²³ While the definition of terms differ and consideration of these differences is beyond the scope of this paper, it is still interesting to note that different disciplinary approaches recognise the validity of an agency-related dimension of well-being.

What must be signalled from the start is that measures of agency as a "dimension of well-being" face a conceptual and related practical difficulty. Sen rejects the view (held by some basic needs theorists) that agency (or, for that matter, opportunity freedom) can adequately be represented only as a dimension of well-being.²⁴ He acknowledges that agency can have intrinsic value, and insofar as it does, I have argued (see Table I) that it can take its place alongside other incommensurable actions and states that have intrinsic value, such as friendship, meaningful work, or being healthy. Sen's capability approach argues that freedoms must be

evaluated with respect to each valuable functioning – freedom also plays an architectonic role with respect to the other dimensions of well-being.²⁵ It would seem consonant with this approach to suggest that, similarly, agency might be more accurately evaluated with respect to different functionings rather than globally.

Agency is often exercised with respect to distinct dimensions and indeed it is precisely the dimension-specific agency levels that may be of interest: a person who is ‘empowered’ as a wife and mother may nonetheless be hesitant to participate in village meetings because of her low educational and social status, and excluded from the labour market because of her gender. While some of the psychologists below focus on enabling persons to develop inner global agency resources for coping with a variety of external circumstances, development is better able to address the external constraints that inhibit agency – such as legal, economic, or social barriers. In these cases, for practical reasons, a measure of dimension-specific expansions in human agency could identify dimensions in which agency might be constrained by external barriers.

Still, there might be occasions in which agency-related domain measures could be of interest, and it might certainly be of interest to pursue this issue empirically. For example, it might be hoped and also expected that increases in agency in one domain might have positive ‘spillover’ effects as persons applied the organisational or leadership skills in new contexts, and it would be interesting to identify which interventions produce larger spillover effects. And other insights might emerge that we cannot now anticipate. Thus it does seem fruitful to consider indicators that measure agency with reference to agency-related dimension(s) well-being. Shalom Schwartz’s Universal Value of Self-direction, Welzel/Inglehart’s analyses of The World Values Survey, and Carol Ryff’s work are chosen as examples.

A further question is whether to measure agency and empowerment, or, rather, to measure disempowerment and oppression. It might be assumed that agency is ‘bi-polar’ – that a low score on disempowerment would inevitably indicate a high score empowerment. However Kahneman’s work among others cautions such assumptions. Thus empirical work would be needed to probe whether measures of one or both are necessary.

It may be worth signalling in advance that the approaches introduced here and in the following section might usefully be explored and assessed along at least four axes, only one of which is undertaken. First, often the work is guided by a theoretical perspective that may or may not be compatible with the capability approach. For example, some theories hold that agency is valued only by individualistic societies, or that it only emerges as a value in post-material societies in which material needs are largely satisfied. This paper mentions, but does not comment upon these theoretical motivations as to do so would lie beyond the scope of this paper. Second, each has developed survey instruments for obtaining information on agency freedom, which are presented and discussed. Third, in some cases researchers have also developed or made improvements upon analytical techniques – such as internal tests for robustness and accuracy of the instruments across cultural, age, and language groups. These techniques are of considerable interest, although attention will focus mainly on the instruments. Fourth, each approach has also generated a body of data and empirical findings, some of which may be of considerable interest and relevance. Again, while these are mentioned in passing, the paper restricts its focus to the measurement instruments.

Schwartz: Self-Direction

Shalom Schwartz has proposed and revised a “theory of the universal content and structure of human values” based on empirical cross-cultural research. In developing a framework for the empirical research, Schwartz et al. have tried to formulate (i) “the substantive content” of values, (ii) the “comprehensiveness” of the values identified, (iii) whether the values have some equivalence of meaning across groups of people, and (iv) whether there is a meaningful and identifiable structure of relations among different values.

Schwartz defines values as “desirable trans-situational goals, varying in importance, that serve as guiding principles in the life of a person or other social entity. Implicit in this definition of values as goals is that (i) they serve the interests of some social entity, (ii) they can motivate action, giving it direction and emotional intensity, (iii) they function as standards for judging and justifying action, and (iv) they are acquired both through socialisation to dominant group values and through the unique learning experiences of individuals.”²⁶ His current set of comprehensive²⁷ value dimensions include the following:

Schwartz: Universal Human Values

Power (social status and prestige, control or dominance over people and resources)
Achievement (personal success through demonstrating competence according to social standards)
Hedonism (pleasure and sensuous gratification for oneself)
Stimulation (excitement, novelty, and challenge in life)
Self-direction (independent thought and action – choosing, creating, exploring)
Universalism (understanding, appreciation, tolerance, and protection for the welfare of all people and for nature)
Benevolence (preservation and enhancement of the welfare of people with whom one is in frequent personal contact)
Tradition (respect, commitment, and acceptance of the customs and ideas that traditional culture or religion provide)
Conformity (restraint of actions, inclinations, and impulses likely to upset or harm others and violate social expectations or norms)
Security (safety, harmony, and stability of society, of relationships, and of self)

Of particular interest in this list is self-direction. Self-direction, like Schwartz’s other values, is recognised to have both terminal or intrinsic value, as well as instrumental value. Sagiv and Schwartz argue that self-direction on their scale corresponds to the term “autonomy” in the self-determination theory that we will explore below. Further, the ability to think, act, choose, create, and explore would seem to relate to agency and to empowerment. What does turn out to introduce some complexities are the “independence” factors of the description, which makes it seem to capture views on individualism as well as views on agency as we have defined it.

Schwartz has measured values in two ways: first, via a long and rather abstract questionnaire, and second, via a “portraits questionnaire” which is appropriate among people of widely varying ages and levels of education.

In the first measure, respondents are presented with a list of about 57 values, each identified by two or three brief phrases. Respondents “set their scale” by choosing and rating

the most important value as seven (“of supreme importance”), the value most opposed to their principles as 1 or, if there is no such value, the least important value as zero. They then rate how each value fares “as a guiding principle in my life” on a scale from negative one to seven.²⁸ Schwartz selected the list of values by drawing on previous studies²⁹ and modified his substantive list of value dimensions in response to evidence from about 200 surveys in 64 countries involving well over 60,000 respondents.³⁰ The values items relating to self direction are:

FREEDOM (freedom of action and thought)
CREATIVITY (uniqueness, imagination)
INDEPENDENT (self-reliant, self-sufficient)
CHOOSING OWN GOALS (selecting own purposes)
CURIOUS (interested in everything, exploring)

Subsequently Schwartz designed a 10-minute instrument specifically for less educated populations 13 years old or above (used initially in Uganda, South Africa, Italy and Israel).³¹ This instrument, called the Portrait Values Questionnaire (PVQ), presents brief descriptions of 29 different people. Each portrait consists of two sentences that characterise the person’s goals, aspirations, and wishes, all expressive of a single value type.³² For example, one of the three self-direction descriptions on the ‘male’ version of the questionnaire describes a self-directed man in these two ways: “He thinks it’s important to be interested in things.” And “He is curious and tries to understand everything.” Respondents are then asked, “How much like you is this person?” They indicate their response in one of six boxes, which are labeled: 6 = very much like me/like me/somewhat like me/a little like me/not like me/1 = not like me at all. The four questions are below (with genders alternating):

- Thinking up new ideas and being creative is important to him. He likes to do things in his own original way.
- It is important to her to make her own decisions about what she does. She likes to be free to plan and to choose her activities for herself.
- He thinks it’s important to be interested in things. He likes to be curious and to try to understand all sorts of things.
- It is important to her to be independent. She likes to rely on herself.

What is not apparent is when Schwartz’ value items would measure peoples’ values with respect to agency as we are using the term. Schwartz leaves the definition of the values to the respondents – the descriptions are deliberately vague. For example, the word ‘freedom’ has diverse connotations (as Sen has shown vigorously), and it is not clear how persons who were part of a family and found ‘freedom of action’ in acting as a member of that group, would interpret the second question above. In this as in all approaches, further work would be required in order to determine either which aspect(s) of agency the instrument(s) measured, or, how they could be modified to provide accurate agency measures.

Schwartz’s Portrait Values Questionnaire in particular presents an interesting methodology and does, it would seem, reflect assessments even among junior respondents (those in Uganda were 13–14 years old). Self-direction is measured as a value, to be rated in comparison with other values. That is, Schwartz’ approach evaluates people’s assessments of the relative value of self-direction in comparison with other values (benevolence, universalism, power, achievement). The conceptual problem with this aspect of the measure is that a primary reason to expand agency might be to further these or other valued goals such as health, or

security, or a higher standard of living. Also, a change in measures of self-direction would indicate a change in values but might not be policy responsive to changes in empowerment. Furthermore, the definition of self-direction conflates “autonomy” with “independence” which means that the measure would seem to combine assessments of agency as Sen understands them with assessments of the value of individual independence. But whereas agency may be of value across communities, clearly the value of individualism differs between people and between cultures. As we shall see in Self Determination Theory, autonomy may fruitfully be distinguished from individualism.

Welzel Inglehart

Welzel and Inglehart are two of a number of writers who have used the World Values Survey to study value priorities in societies that are undergoing modernisation. Inglehart’s central thesis is that “economic, cultural, and political change go together in coherent patterns that are changing the world in predictable ways.”³³ He studies the changes in values that accompany material and economic transformations during modernisation. Of particular note is the work by Inglehart and Welzel on “liberty aspirations” and how these link to democracy.

The World Values Survey includes about 350 questions on economic, political, and cultural variables. While the core questions remain constant, the survey has been modified four times, and carried out in four ‘waves’, beginning in 1981, 1990, 1995, and 1999. The WVS has completed representative national surveys of basic values and beliefs in over 65 independent countries whose combined populations accounts for 80% of the world’s inhabitants. Initially most participating countries were European, but the last two waves of surveys have included developing countries to a much greater extent. This database is an empirical resource for many analyses of values and value changes; its web page states that over 300 publications in 16 languages analyse its data.³⁴ Certain questions contained in the WVS that may themselves be of independent interest for agency studies.

Drawing on Sen’s work among others, Welzel and Inglehart identify the importance of civil and political freedoms to human development. However countering an empirical study by Przeworski and Limongi³⁵ Welzel and Inglehart argue that “Economic development does contribute to the emergence of democracy and it does so dramatically.” Drawing on their empirical study in Eastern Europe, Welzel and Inglehart argue that the values form an intermediate variable between economic development and democratisation. Economic development “reshapes prevailing public preferences”³⁶ including preferences relating to liberty or freedom. In turn these new “mass priorities provide a source of public pressure that can favor democratization.”³⁷ Welzel and Inglehart then try to measure the intermediate values term.

To measure changes in pro-freedom preferences, Welzel and Inglehart create an index of “mass liberty aspirations” that draws on data from the WVS.³⁸ The question upon which they draw is below:

There is a lot of talk these days about what the aims of this country should be for the next 10 years. On this card are listed some of the goals which different people would give top priority. Would you please say which one of these you, yourself, consider the most important? And which one would be the next most important?³⁹

The respondent is then shown cards with four items on them.

Card 1

- 1-1 A high level of economic growth
- 1-2 Making sure this country has strong defense forces
- 1-3 Seeing that people have more say about how things are done at their jobs and in their communities**
- 1-4 Trying to make our cities and countryside more beautiful

Card 2

- 2-1 Maintaining order in the nation
- 2-2 Giving people more say in important government decisions**
- 2-3 Fighting rising prices
- 2-4 Protecting freedom of speech**

The “mass liberty aspirations” index is created from the embolded entries (1–3, 2–2, and 2–4) in the following way. Each respondent gave a value of “top priority” (=2) “second priority” (=1) or “no priority” (=0) to each of these items. The responses for the selected three items are coded and summed, to make an ordinal index from 0 to 5, with 0 being lowest priority and 5 being the highest. Aggregating these at the national level creates a continuous scale from 0 to 5, of “mass liberty aspirations”, which can then be subjected to the various data tests before use.

The mass liberty aspirations by Welzel and Inglehart probes people’s agency aspirations with respect to public space. The index was created in order to evaluate how changes in individual aspirations relate to formal democratisation processes; implicit in this is the description of political agency as a dimension of well-being. Changes in a woman’s agency within the household, or changes in agency derived from an NGO microcredit or savings program, might not be captured very directly by these measures. Similarly, as indeed Inglehart found in other work, responses to terms such as ‘Freedom of speech’ reflect to some extent the individualism or collectivism of the culture. As in the case of Schwartz, it would be desirable for agency measures to be distinct from measures of the value of individualism.

NOTE: Other questions within the WVS may, upon closer inspection and analysis, also pertain to agency and/or empowerment. The questions raise issues such as perceptions of free choice and control, perceptions of the freedom to make decisions at the workplace, attitudes towards change, and how others perceive the respondent. The extent to which any of these throw light on an agency domain would need careful scrutiny and testing. These are reproduced on page 18.

Carol Ryff

Carol Ryff⁴⁰ and colleagues have developed an approach to measuring domains of psychological well-being which complement research on subjective well-being or life satisfaction. Subjective well-being leaves it entirely up to the individual to define their values, thus is relativist and open to adaptive preferences. In contrast, Ryff and other authors such as Ryan in this survey take a normative approach, in which they seek to identify elements that characterise psychological well-being across cultures. First, she identified six domains of well-being by synthesizing domains from three schools of psychology that had developed normative conceptions of psychological well-being.⁴¹ These domains are:

World Values Survey: Selected Questions									
V95 Some people feel they have completely free choice and control over their lives, and other people feel that what they do has no real effect on what happens to them. Please use the scale to indicate how much freedom of choice and control you feel you have over the way your life turns out.									
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

None at all	A great deal
V 117 How free are you to make decisions in your job? Please use this card to indicate how much decision-making freedom you feel you have.	
1	2
3	4
5	6
7	8
9	10
None at all	A great deal
Now I want to ask you some questions about your outlook on life. Each card I show you has two contrasting statements on it. Using the scale listed, could you tell me where you would place your own view? 1 means you agree completely with the statement on the left; 10 means you agree completely with the statement on the right, or you can choose any number in between.	
V 323	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
A) One should be cautious about making major changes in life	You will never achieve much unless you act boldly
V 324	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
B) Ideas that have stood the test of time are generally best	New ideas are generally better than old ones
V 325	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
C) When changes occur in my life I worry about the difficulties they may cause	When changes occur in my life, I welcome the possibility that something new is beginning
A variety of characteristics are listed here. Could you take a look at them and select those which apply to you?	
V326 A)	I usually count on being successful in everything I do
V327 B)	I enjoy convincing others of my opinion
V328 C)	I often notice that I serve as a model for others
V329 D)	I am good at getting what I want
V330 E)	I own many things others envy me for
V331 F)	I like to assume responsibility
V332 G)	I am rarely unsure about how I should behave
V333 H)	I often give others advice
V334	None of the above.

1. *Self-acceptance*: having a positive attitude towards oneself and one's past life
2. *Purpose in life*: having goals and objectives that give life meaning
3. ***Environmental mastery***: being able to manage complex demands of daily life
4. *Personal growth*: having a sense of continued development and self-realization
5. *Positive relations with others*: possessing caring and trusting ties with others
6. ***Autonomy***: being able to follow one's own convictions

The domains are measured by surveys of variable length (the three forms of surveys have 14, 9, and 3 statements per domain). Respondents are asked to indicate their agreement with each statement along a 6-point scale. The 3-question form is being used for international comparisons, which are underway in 18 language groups.

Expansions of agency freedom, might be detected by at least two of Ryff's dimensions. For example, consider the definition of a 'high scorer' in two areas (the three questions that appear on the shortest questionnaire are below):

Environmental Mastery: "Has a sense of mastery and competence in managing the environment; controls complex array of external activities; makes effective use of surrounding opportunities; able to choose or create contexts suitable to personal needs and values."

1. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live.
2. The demands of everyday life often get me down.

3. I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life.

Autonomy: “is self-determining and independent; able to resist social pressures to think and act in certain ways; regulates behavior from within; evaluates self by personal standards.”

1. I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions.
2. I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus.
3. I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important.

Ryff and colleagues use this work in hierarchical regression analyses with different age cohorts to ascertain how people’s conceptions of well-being change with age.⁴² They also track which aspects of their well-being people cultivate at different stages of life.⁴³ For example, Ryff and Heidrick 1997 study whether different normative and non-normative life events “were significant predictors of multiple aspects of present and future wellness” among different age cohorts. Thus their measures are sensitive to change over time, although it is not known whether they are sufficiently sensitive to be used as policy instruments.

Ryff’s work has been criticised for cultural bias, arising from the cultural surroundings and presuppositions of her source authors (the synthesis domains did not temper the cultural values and assumptions of the original authors).⁴⁴ Certainly the questions would require adaptation for cross-cultural comparability. The concepts are also distinct: “Self-mastery” measures control, and “autonomy” measures independence rather than valued agency. The survey also is problematic, as signaled above, because people’s agency may be quite variable in different domains and it is precisely these differences that may be of interest, yet a global response will masque such differences. Consider the question, “In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live”. In order to choose a number, a woman who answers this question may need to balance, fleetingly, her home life and relation to her husband and in-laws, her political life, and outlets of local or national political expression, her women’s cooperative, and the women’s willingness to lend her personal or material support in times of need. She may answer this question with relation to one of these domains – the one that popped into mind. Or she may try to give an aggregate of her different domain-specific agencies (Medium low at home; low politically, but very high with reference to the women’s group, so on balance, four out of six). What might of interest for many purposes would be to disaggregate this, and ascertain agency or empowerment changes with respect to certain dimensions. For this reason, we turn to Self-efficacy Scales, and Self-Determination theory, as each of these do so, albeit in different ways.

MULTIDOMAIN AGENCY MEASURES

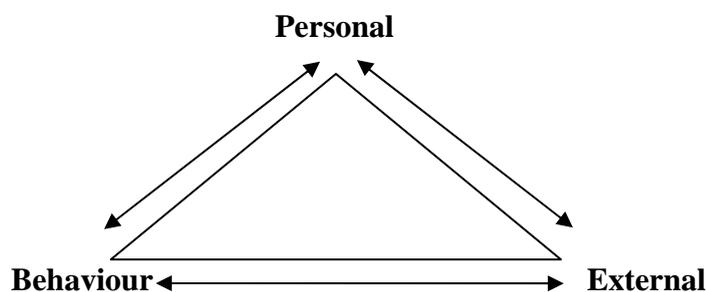
This section introduces two further approaches to measuring human agency, which comprise perhaps the most appropriate avenues for further exploration. These measures can be used with respect to different domains or dimensions of well-being (work, health, education, political participation, gender relations etc), some of which might be quite narrow, and others of which might track broader shifts.

Self-Efficacy

The first significant empirical approach is the self-efficacy approach initiated by Albert Bandura.⁴⁵ Bandura sometimes refers to this approach as a ‘theory of human agency’ and also discusses it using the language of capabilities and of empowerment:

Converging lines of evidence reveal that personal and social change rely extensively on methods of empowerment.⁴⁶ These approaches achieve their effects by equipping people with the requisite knowledge, skills, and resilient self-beliefs of efficacy to alter aspects of their lives over which they can exercise some control. Studies of various aspects of personal change indicate that methods of empowerment operate through the self-efficacy mechanism.⁴⁷ However, the mode of operation and the generality of this mediating mechanism require further verification.⁴⁸

The self-efficacy theory holds that empowerment or human agency has internal as well as external determinants: if people perceive themselves to be more capable of accomplishing certain activities, they are more likely to undertake them. “Because judgments and actions are partly self-determined, people can effect change in themselves and their situations through their own efforts.”⁴⁹ Of course people’s efficacy is limited by the external environment, as well as by their own behaviours. Bandura sketches “three major classes of determinants in triadic reciprocal causation. **B** represents behaviour; **P** the internal personal factors in the form of cognitive, affective, and biological events; and **E** the external environment.”⁵⁰



A key question is how people can causally contribute to their own motivation to act – how they can increase their agency or freedom? Note that “Freedom is not conceived negatively as the absence of external coercion or constraints. Rather, it is defined positively in terms of the exercise of self-influence.”⁵¹ Some might learn new information, skills or behaviours; but some contributors are internal and personal – they relate to P.

The self-efficacy approach argues that people’s perceived self-efficacy comprises a key determinant of people’s motivation, their level of effort, and their perseverance in a task. Perceived self-efficacy is a “judgment of capability”⁵² in that it concerns “people’s beliefs in their capabilities to exercise control over their own functioning and over events that affect their lives.”⁵³ A second way in which people exercise personal agency is through goal representations and the capacity of forethought. “People anticipate the likely consequences of their prospective actions, they set goals for themselves, and they plan courses of action likely to produce desired outcomes.”⁵⁴ Anticipated outcomes form a third agency mechanism related to people’s “ability to envision the likely outcomes of prospective actions.” “People’s perceptions of their efficacy influence the types of anticipatory scenarios they construct and reiterate.”⁵⁵ People with strong self-efficacy beliefs imagine positive outcomes more easily. Finally, people’s self-efficacy beliefs, their goal representations, and their anticipated outcomes are also modulated by feedback mechanisms. Yet to sustain motivation, self-efficacy beliefs must not only learn from failure; they must also be positive enough to override some negative feedback. Failures are natural, yet optimistic humans can improve and accomplish tasks they failed in earlier: “Forethought often saves us from the perils of a foreshortened perspective,”⁵⁶ write Bandura, citing the persistence, in the face of rejection and failure, exhibited by Gertrude Stein, James Joyce, Van Gough, Rodin, Stravinsky, Frank Lloyd Wright, and the Beatles (whose recording contract Decca Records turned down with the remark: “We don’t like their sound. Groups of guitars are on their way out”⁵⁷).

Empirically, measures are constructed of people's perceived self-efficacy, which "is concerned with people's belief in their capabilities to mobilise the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to exercise control over given events."⁵⁸ Bandura and colleagues have used these measures with respect to cognitive functioning, health functioning, clinical (psychological) functioning, athletic functioning, organisational functioning, and collective efficacy.⁵⁹

Perceived self-efficacy is measured by constructing scales, with 5–20 items each.⁶⁰ The scale is the simple average of responses. The items in each scale each refer to efficacy with respect only to one domain, because this approach argues that perceived self-efficacy "is not a global trait but a differentiated set of beliefs linked to distinct realms of functioning. Multi-domain measures reveal the patterning and degree of generality of people's sense of personal efficacy"⁶¹ The measures are intended to isolate self-efficacy from related but distinct topics such as self-esteem, locus of control, and outcome expectancies.

Respondents are asked to rate the strength of their perceived efficacy, or their perceived capability to execute a certain activity. The scale ranged from complete uncertainty (0) to complete certitude (10) – or sometimes (5). Respondents may "practice" using the scale with a simple question (such as can you lift an object weighing x pounds) before completing the questionnaire. Normally self-efficacy scales would only be one set of variables collected in a study.

The scales are designed to be sensitive to variations in the generality, strength, and level of self-efficacy, and to track changes in quite short intervening periods. For example, Ozer and Bandura (2002) developed three scales, which were administered at four points in time, each being five weeks apart. Between the second and third administration, participants (who were women) received a 22.5-hour class in self-defence training. The efficacy scales were used to study changes in perceived self-efficacy with respect to self-defence, as well as changes in wider forms of self-efficacy with respect to interpersonal relationships and leisure activities. In this example self-defence, interpersonal relationships, and leisure activities are the "domains" with respect to which perceived self-efficacy is measured.

In addition to measuring individual self-efficacy, two kinds of measures can be constructed to represent "perceived collective efficacy". Perceived collective efficacy is defined as "a group's shared belief in its conjoint capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given levels of attainments."⁶² The social-cognitive theory Bandura uses distinguishes between personal agency, and proxy, and collective forms of agency. Similar questions enable individuals to rank each kind of "efficacy" on scales from 1 to 5. In addition to the perceived personal efficacy introduced above (handling activities in family, in partnership, at work, managing personal finances and health), questions address proxy or individual social efficacy (perceived capabilities to contribute individually to improvements in social problems, or to functions they perform in a group) and collective social efficacy (capabilities of society or a group operating as a whole to effect desired improvements – e.g. in unemployment, corruption, criminal and drug activities, economic crises, and terrorism).⁶³ While Bandura's own interest focuses on the way that individuals' efficacy beliefs can be cultivated in order to increase efficacy itself, the measures may also be of interest to those whose primary variables are external to the person or community.

Self-efficacy scales have been criticised for not being able to distinguish between

activities that agents undertake because they pertain to the agent's conception of the good, and "the activities they feel coerced or seduced into doing."⁶⁴ This distinction would be important for a measure that adequately represented Sen's concept of human agency. Critics have also observed that a positive measure of self-efficacy might reflect greater functional skills and competence rather than only, or even mainly, agency freedom. This could make the self-efficacy measures of interest for measuring some aspects of empowerment, but less accurate as a pure agency measure.

Others have explored whether Bandura's claim to the universality of self-efficacy scales across cultures is empirically validated, or whether self-efficacy reflects a more 'Western' mental construct. In a careful survey of 20 such studies, Klassen found that "it is clear. . . that efficacy beliefs operate differently in non-Western countries than they do in Western cultures."⁶⁵ He found that efficacy scales were lower in collectivist cultures (who achieved high levels of performance while holding more realistic efficacy beliefs) than in individualist cultures, but also that they were a good predictor of performance across countries. It may be that collective efficacy scales should replace self-efficacy in some cultural settings.

The self- and collective efficacy scales are potentially interesting for the purposes of describing subjective perceptions of efficacy, which are clearly a contributing factor to human agency, and one which is not captured by measures of external barriers. Bandura views self-efficacy as an instrumental intervening variable, one of multiple determinants of human motivation, and thus one explanatory factor for empowerment or disempowerment. Self-efficacy scales are relatively straightforward, and potentially policy-responsive. Their comparability across cultures has raised interesting issues, although they have not been used with poor or illiterate populations. While the scales might potentially track important attitudinal shifts, they would not provide information on external barriers to empowerment – and these are the main barriers which are of interest to other disciplines. Also, the scales would not reflect a key aspect of agency, namely the degree to which the 'efficacious' activity was valued by the respondent.

Self-Determination Theory

The self-determination theory (SDT) of Ryan and Deci and colleagues arises out of a school of psychologists who understand human beings to have a few "basic developmental propensities and psychological needs, supports for which are essential to well-being."⁶⁶ On the basis of empirical study Self-Determination Theory identified the three basic psychological needs that, its authors argue, are pre-requisites to well-being that pertain across cultures: autonomy, competence, and relatedness.⁶⁷ These needs are "innate psychological nutrients that are essential for ongoing psychological growth, integrity, and well-being."⁶⁸

SDT describes autonomy – the variable of interest to this paper – in the following way:

a person is autonomous when his or her behaviour is experienced as willingly enacted and when he or she fully endorses the actions in which he or she is engaged and/or the values expressed by them. People are therefore most autonomous when they act in accord with their authentic interests or integrated values and desires (Deci and Ryan, 1985, 2000; Ryan et al., 1995).⁶⁹

SDT contrasts autonomy with its [presumed] opposite, heteronomy, "in which one's actions are experienced as controlled by forces that are phenomenally alien to the self, or that compels one to behave in specific ways regardless of one's values or interests."⁷⁰

As is immediately apparent, this definition is the closest to Sen's concept of agency,

because it focuses on capabilities that the person values (in contrast to self-efficacy, which identifies capabilities a person understands herself to have – whether or not she values them).

The attention within SDT to autonomy, which Deci and Ryan describe as ‘‘the experience of integration and freedom, and . . . an essential aspect of healthy human functioning’’⁷¹ generated a vigorous empirical debate within the field. Some argued and attempted to demonstrate empirically that autonomy is not universally valued, but is rather valued by, and useful in, more individualist cultures and societies alone. In a powerful rebuttal to this attack, Chirkov et al. distinguished autonomy – conceptually as well as empirically – from several related concepts: dependence/independence, and individualism/collectivism, and vertical/horizontal.⁷²

It is worthwhile to note their distinction between dependence and independence. Of particular interest, given the other measures surveyed, is the possibility that a person could be autonomously dependent. The basic terms are defined as follows:

SDT defines dependence as reliance on others for guidance, support, or needed supplies (Ryan and Lynch, 1989). Within SDT, the opposite of dependence is not autonomy but rather independence, the circumstance of not relying on others for support, help, or supplies.

Thus SDT argues that a person can be autonomously dependent or autonomously independent – that these categories are orthogonal to one another. An autonomous person might, for example, welcome others’ influence and be responsive to good advice – or she might be inclined to resist any external influences. Similarly, they argue that an autonomous person may be more individualist (ascribing ‘‘relative priority. . . to the individual’s goals and preferences’’⁷³), or more collectivist (priority placed on the needs, norms, and goals of one’s group or collective’’⁷⁴). Finally, they argue that individualism and collectivism can be fruitfully distinguished from horizontal and vertical aspects of culture, where these refer to ‘‘practices and norms supporting equality or interchangeability among people versus hierarchical or subordinate social relations.’’⁷⁵

What threatens autonomy is not verticalism, not individualism, and not dependence, but rather coercion. For example a person could be acting within rules set by a parent, or by social norms, or by law, and doing so autonomously because the person internally endorsed those rules. Alternatively, one could be acting in the same way but feeling utterly coerced and oppressed by the parent, the norms, or the law. In the first instance, autonomy – and indeed agency – is not compromised; in the second it is.

In order to test whether autonomy was empirically distinguishable from dependence/independence and from individualism/collectivism – and that autonomy was valued in collectivist cultures – Chirkov et al. tested a cross-culturally valid methodology for measuring autonomy.⁷⁶ To determine autonomy, the study first asked respondents whether they engaged in certain practices (for the purposes of the study these practices distinguished individualist vs collectivist and vertical vs horizontal orientations, but other practices might be chosen).⁷⁷ Respondents then were asked to rate, from 1 to 5, four possible reasons why they felt, or believed, or engaged in the practice (1=not at all because of this reason; 5=completely because of this reason). The possible reasons ranged from less autonomous (1) to more autonomous (4) and were as follows:

1. External Regulation: Because of external pressures (to get rewards or avoid punishments). I would engage in this behaviour because someone insists on my doing this, or I expect to get some kind of reward,

or avoid some punishment for behaving this way.

2. **Introjected Regulation:** To get approval or avoid guilt. I would engage in this behaviour because people around me would approve of me for doing so, or because I think I should do it. If I didn't do this I might feel guilty, ashamed, or anxious.

3. **Identified Regulation:** Because it is important. I would engage in this behaviour because I personally believe that it is important and worthwhile to behave this way.

4. **Integrated Regulation:** Because I have thoughtfully considered and fully chosen this. I have thought about this behaviour and fully considered alternatives. It makes good sense to me to act this way. I feel free in choosing and doing it.⁷⁸

Testing autonomy thus defined across four countries (Turkey, Russia, the U.S. and Korea) produced a series of interesting findings that broadly supported the SDT claims, and established that autonomy can be distinguished from individualism,⁷⁹ as well as from horizontal vs vertical outlooks, and that autonomy is correlated with well-being for persons in individualist as well as collectivist cultures.⁸⁰

The SDT approach to measuring autonomy is of considerable interest for several reasons. First, previous empirical studies have apparently been able to use variants of this instrument to discern changes in autonomy, so the instrument has the potential of being sensitive to policy-changes. Second, the concept of autonomy is carefully distinguished, and empirically distinguishable from, individualism and independence, and thus potentially relevant across cultures and societies much in the same way that Sen understands agency to be relevant across cultures. Third, the self-regulation scales can be adapted to measure autonomy with respect to different practices or to different dimensions of well-being. Indeed the SDT have developed separate questionnaires for autonomy related to education (from elementary age on up, including persons with learning disorders), health-related behaviours, religion, pro-social behaviours, friendship, and exercise. Agency can be differently exhibited in different spheres – within the household, in gender relations, in health practices, in political domains. The SDT autonomy tool could, conceivably, be used to map agency in different domains. Fourth, the tool is relatively brief, which improves feasibility and reduces costs. Fifth, the MACS technique provides ways to test the comparability of the constructs across cultures, thus improving the potential robustness of the tool. While each of the measures surveyed in this article challenge the view that agency freedoms are intangible, the effort to distinguish agency from individualism and independence makes SDT a particularly rich vein of work (Table II).

CONCLUSION

The overall thrust of Sen's Dewey lectures was to reject the "Well-Being as Informational Foundation (WAIF)" approach and to argue that greater information should be brought to bear in the assessment of states and actions, including information on agency. This paper has addressed one of the pedantic difficulties of doing so, namely the methods by which information on agency freedom might be gathered directly. Admittedly, the magpie approach of venturing into other disciplinary gardens to collect glittering measurement objects with but passing regard for their setting and significance can seem hasty or ill-advised, and certainly intrusive. It is hoped, however, that explorations such as this will encourage interactions between those working in these areas, or perhaps the sharing of sturdy cuttings in place of flimsy tinsel.

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Table 2

Author(s)	Theory	Method/Scale	Assessment
Schwartz	<p>Self Direction is one of ten universal values that motivate human action.</p> <p>Self direction is independent thought and action – choosing creating exploring</p>	<p>Rate how each value fares as a guiding principle in my life from 0 to 7.</p> <p>FREEDOM (freedom of action and thought) CREATIVITY (uniqueness, imagination) INDEPENDENT (self-reliant, self-sufficient) CHOOSING OWN GOALS (selecting own purposes) CURIOUS (interested in everything, exploring)</p>	<p>Definitions are local but may not be comparable across cultures.</p> <p>Measures relative value of agency <i>in comparison</i> with other goals. (not its instrumental use in furthering such goals)</p> <p>Might not be policy responsive.</p> <p>Might conflate agency with individualism / independence</p>
Welzel, Inglehart	<p>Mass liberty Aspirations are a measurable intermediate variable. They are (partly) created by economic development and in turn provide a source of public pressure for democratization.</p>	<p>Code and sum 3 items, each ranked 0-2, to give an ordinal index 0-5.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Seeing that people have more say about how things are done at their jobs and in their communities 2. Giving people more say in important government decisions 3. Protecting freedom of speech 	<p>Look at agency with respect to public space only. (political agency)</p> <p>Might pick up values of individualism (in freedom of speech question).</p> <p>Would need other measures for women’s agency etc.</p>
Ryff	<p>Psychological Well-being across cultures includes six domains, two of relevance: Environmental mastery (being able to choose or create contexts suitable for personal needs and values); and Autonomy (is self-determining and independent)</p>	<p>Indicate agreement with statements along a 6-point scale (there are different survey forms, with 3, 9, or 14 statements per domain).</p> <p>Environmental Mastery</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live. 2. The demands of everyday life often get me down. 3. I am quite good at managing the many responsibilities of my daily life. <p>Autonomy:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I tend to be influenced by people with strong opinions. 2. I have confidence in my opinions, even if they are contrary to the general consensus. 3. I judge myself by what I think is important, not by the values of what others think is important. 	<p>Source lists for psychological well-being were biased.</p> <p>Questionnaires would require adaptation across cultures.</p> <p>Looks at global rather than domain-specific, agency, and the practical relevance of such evaluations needs study.</p> <p>Better to study agency with respect to certain domains rather than life as a whole.</p>
Self-Efficacy Bandura et al	<p>People’s agency has internal and external determinants; people can learn to increase</p>	<p>Measures people’s belief in their capabilities to exercise control over given events with respect to a specific domain (health, sport, collective action)</p>	<p>Cannot discern if agents value the goals they can advance efficaciously.</p>

	<p>their own agency.</p> <p>Self-efficacy is</p>	<p>Construct scales, 5-20 items per scale. Each item is ranked 0-10 (or 0-5). Scale is the sum of item rankings.</p> <p>Items vary depending on the domain with respect to which self-efficacy is measured.</p>	<p>May be policy-responsive</p> <p>Can be used for different domains</p> <p>May be good predictors across cultures,</p> <p>In some settings collective-efficacy may be a more useful scales than self-efficacy because they are less individualist</p>
<p>Self Determination theory</p> <p>Ryan, Deci et al</p>	<p>Humans have 3 basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness.</p> <p>Autonomy is the experience of integration and freedom.</p> <p>Autonomy can be distinguished from dependence/independence and from individualism / collectivism.</p>	<p>Identifies practice(s) that pertain to a given domain.</p> <p>Asks persons to rate, from 1 to 5, the following possible reasons why they felt/believe/ engage in the practice.</p> <p>External Regulation: Because of external pressures</p> <p>Introjected Regulation: To obtain approval or avoid guilt.</p> <p>Identified Regulation: Because it is important and worthwhile.</p> <p>Integrated Regulation: Because I have thoughtfully considered and fully chosen this.</p>	<p>Explores agency that people value and have reason to value</p> <p>May be policy-responsive</p> <p>Distinguishes autonomy from individualism</p> <p>Appears to identify a relevant and valued domain across cultures</p> <p>Can be used with respect to different domains</p>

NOTES

¹ I am very grateful for the comments of Richard Ryan, Carol Ryff, Valery Chirkov, Ed Deci, Shalom Schwartz, Ron Inglehart, Séverine Deneulin, Sebastian Silva Leander and two anonymous referees. Errors remain my own.

² 1999a: 53.

³ Carvalho and White (1998) distinguish quantitative from qualitative research by the methods of data collection, where quantitative data is collected by household surveys, with rigorous sampling methods. See also Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998), Bamberger (2000), Kanbur (2003).

⁴ 1985:169 (opening sentences). Note that Sen's Arrow lectures use instead the terminology of process and opportunity freedoms, with personal process freedoms relating most closely to empowerment. (2002: Chapter 19–21).

⁵ 1985: 203.

⁶ 1985: 206.

⁷ 1985: 204 both quotes.

⁸ 1995: 106 see also 1989.

⁹ 1999b: 10 See also India: Development and Participation 2002 p 10 "Participation also plays a crucial role in the formation of values and in generating social understanding." p 10.

¹⁰ 1999b: 11.

¹¹ The first of Sen's Dewey Lectures, on the moral role of information, makes this point (Sen, 1985) as does Sen 1979.

¹² 2000/1: 34, 35 respectively.

¹³ 2000/1: 39 The World Bank's (2002) manual defines empowerment as: "the expansion of assets and capabilities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives."

¹⁴ Alkire (2002a, b), Grisez et al. (1987), Nussbaum (2000).

¹⁵ 1985:207–208.

¹⁶ Cummins (2000b). See also Cummins (2002), and Schulz 2000. In quality of life measures, Cummins and others found the intracorrelations among subjective and among objective measures of individual quality of life to be much stronger than the intercorrelations between the two types of measures, except among the very poor. This led to a hypothesis that subjective satisfaction may be under "homeostatic control" (see Cummins, 2003) and that subjective measures should accompany and not replace objective measures.

¹⁷ Diener and Suh (2000).

¹⁸ See Argyle and Martin (1991), and Argyle et al. (1991). Argyle and Martin find that the 'causes of joy' – joy being fleeting emotional happiness – to be: Social contacts with friends, or others in close relationship, Sexual activity; Success, achievement; Physical activity, exercise, sport; Nature, reading, music; Food and drink; Alcohol. This list does not include health, education, or other 'basic needs' with which poverty reduction is primarily concerned, and does include activities in which development professionals do not have an evident comparative advantage. The domains of well-being conceived of as life satisfaction are more similar to the domains that comprise 'multidimensional' poverty, and have been selected for that reason.

¹⁹ Alkire (2002a, b); Grisez et al. (1987).

²⁰ One may thus consider people's ability to effect their own life circumstance with respect to life/health/reproduction; or with respect to understanding/knowledge etc.

²¹ World Bank 2002.

²² Diener and Suh (2000), Diener et al. (1999). See also Smith and Harris Bond (1993). Van de Vijver and Leung (2000).

²³ These and other approaches are surveyed in Alkire (2002a, b).

²⁴ Alkire (2002a) Chapter 5.

²⁵ See also Nussbaum (2000).

²⁶ 1994:21 see also Schwartz and Bilsky 1987, 1990, and Schwartz 1992.

²⁷ For an explanation of the test of comprehensiveness see 1992:37.

²⁸ 7: of supreme importance. 6: very important. 5, 4 unlabeled; 3: important. 2,1 unlabeled. 0: not important. 1: opposed to my values.

²⁹ Schwartz cites Rokeach 1973, Braithwaite & Law 1985, Chinese Culture Connection, 1987, Hofstede, 1980, Levy & Guttman, 1974, Munro, 1985, and the "examination of texts on comparative religion and from consultations with Muslim and Druze Scholars" 1992:17.

³⁰ Schwartz 1994 summarises progress until that date. His work also cross-references other values theories and

research. The 64 countries include 2 African, 2 North American, 4 Latin American, 8 Asian, 2 South Asian, 8 E European, 1 Middle Eastern, 14 European, 2 Mediterranean, Australia and New Zealand.

³¹ See Schwartz et al. (2001), Munene and Schwartz (2000).

³² Schwartz et al. (2001: 521).

³³ 1997:7.

³⁴ <http://wvs.isr.umich.edu/index.html> accessed 28 July 2004.

³⁵ 1997.

³⁶ mimeo p 8.

³⁷ mimeo p 7, drawing on Inglehart and Wenzel (2004) Again, p. 12: “Mass liberty aspirations give rise to public pressure for growing freedom- and to public resistance against the curtailment of freedom.”

³⁸ forthcoming 2005.

³⁹ Inglehart (1997: 108).

⁴⁰ Carol Ryff is the Director for the Center for Aging at Univ of Wisconsin, and has over 40 academic papers on this topic. Hazel Markus, the David-Brack Professor of Psychology at Stanford, has adapted Ryff’s domains in her own investigation of how gender, ethnicity, social class, cohort, or region or country of national origin may influence self-concept and self-esteem.

⁴¹ She consulted 3 theoretical schools. Life-span developmental theories Erikson’s 1959 psycho-social stage model, Buhler’s basic life tendencies (Buhler 1935, Bulher and Massarik, 1968), Neugarten (1968, 1973); clinical theories of personal growth – Maslow (1968), Rogers (1961), Jung (1933, von Franz 1964), Allport (1961); and mental health literature – Jahoda (1958).

⁴² For example Ryff (1989c).

⁴³ Ryff (1991).

⁴⁴ Christopher (1999):146f details criticisms of each subscale.

⁴⁵ Bandura’s and related work has been collected in Bandura, A. (1997): See also Bandura (1977, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1995, 2000, 2001a, b, and 2002).

⁴⁶ Bandura (1988); Rappaport et al. (1984); Ratcliff (1984); Silbert (1984).

⁴⁷ Bandura (1986).

⁴⁸ Ozer and Bandura (1990), opening paragraph.

⁴⁹ Bandura (1989: 1175).

⁵⁰ Bandura (1997): 6 see also Bandura (1986).

⁵¹ Bandura (1989: 1182).

⁵² Bandura (2001a: 1).

⁵³ Bandura (1994) gives four different titles to ways by which people increase their perceived self-efficacy: by having successful “mastery experiences”, by the vicarious experiences provided by social models, by social persuasion, and by learning to manage negative stress responses (p. 72–74).

⁵⁴ Bandura (1989: 1179).

⁵⁵ Bandura (1989: 1176).

⁵⁶ Bandura (1989: 1181).

⁵⁷ Bangura (1989: 1177) citing White (1982).

⁵⁸ Ozer and Bandura (1990: 472).

⁵⁹ Bandura (1997).

⁶⁰ Bandura (2001).

⁶¹ Bandura (2001: 1).

⁶² Bandura (1997: 477) Political efficacy is, they argue, a subset of collective efficacy (p. 482–504). See also Bandura (1995, 2000, 2001a, 2002).

⁶³ Fernandez-Ballesteros et al. (2002). See Bandura (2001a).

⁶⁴ Deci and Ryan (2000: 257).

⁶⁵ 2004: 224 see Bandura (2002b).

⁶⁶ Chirkov et al. (2003: 97).

⁶⁷ Ryan and Deci (2000).

⁶⁸ Deci and Ryan (2000: 229).

⁶⁹ Chirkov et al. (2003: 98).

⁷⁰ Chirkov et al. (2003: 98).

⁷¹ Deci and Ryan (2000: 231).

⁷² Following Triandis 1995. See also Oyserman, who does not mention SDT however.

⁷³ Chirkov et al. (2003: 98–99).

⁷⁴ Chirkov et al. 2003: 99).

⁷⁵ Chirkov et al. (2003: 99).

⁷⁶ Chirkov et al. (2003) explicitly tested for “measurement invariance and latent construct comparability” using the

Means and Covariance Structure Analysis (MACS) of Little 1997 and 2000, and this methodology may be of independent interest for subjective quantitative measures of agency.

⁷⁷ This follows the Self-Regulatory Questionnaire of Cultural Practices, based on Ryan and Connell (1989), Vallerand (1997), and Sheldon and Houser-Marko (2001).

⁷⁸ Chirkov et al. (2003: 102). These four are explained at greater length in Deci and Ryan (2000).

⁷⁹ Seen Oyserman et al. (2002), whose in-depth review of empirical psychological studies of individualism and collectivism between European Americans and non-Americans or African/Latino/Asian Americans, found that “these differences were neither as large nor as systematic as often perceived.”

⁸⁰ Chirkov et al. (2003).