Supplementary Material
Die Fakten dicke! Der GESIS Podcast #5

„Religiosität total vermessen! Konzeptspezifikation, Operationalisierung und Messung"

December 2021

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From Concept to Measurement

From Concept to Measurement

How can theoretical concepts/constructs be "translated", transformed or transferred into questions?

Three Steps

1) Specify the concept and distinguish between concept by intuition and concept by postulation

2) Operationalize the concept

3) Measure

From Concept to Measurement

According to Blalock (1990), there are two types of concepts.

Concepts by intuition

are simple concepts whose meaning is immediately obvious.
e.g., evaluations, importance, demographic variables

Concepts by postulation

are less obvious concepts that require explicit definitions. They are also referred to as constructs. They cannot be measured by single items but by multiple items representing concepts by intuition.
e.g., racism, religion, integration, power

From Concept to Measurement

Concept of interest

theoretical term, not directly observable *(e.g., religiosity, identity)*

Concept specification

defining the concept, we want to measure and specifying its dimension(s)

(e.g., religiosity is the religious orientation and the involvement with religion)

Operationalization

translating the concept into a set of specific operations and procedures that are suitable to empirically capture the concept's meaning

(e.g., frequency of church attendance, frequency of praying, type of religion believed in)
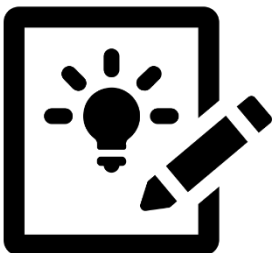
Measurement

assigning numbers to objects according to defined rules in a way that a structurally accurate mapping is created

*(i.e., low/high values reflect low/strong religiosity)*

Measurement Error

Concept of interest → Observed variable

The relationship between the concept of interest (what we want to measure) and the observed variable (what we actually measure with a survey question) is often assumed to be perfect. That is, our observed variable measures exactly the concept of interest.

Measurement Error

Random error

Concept of interest

True score
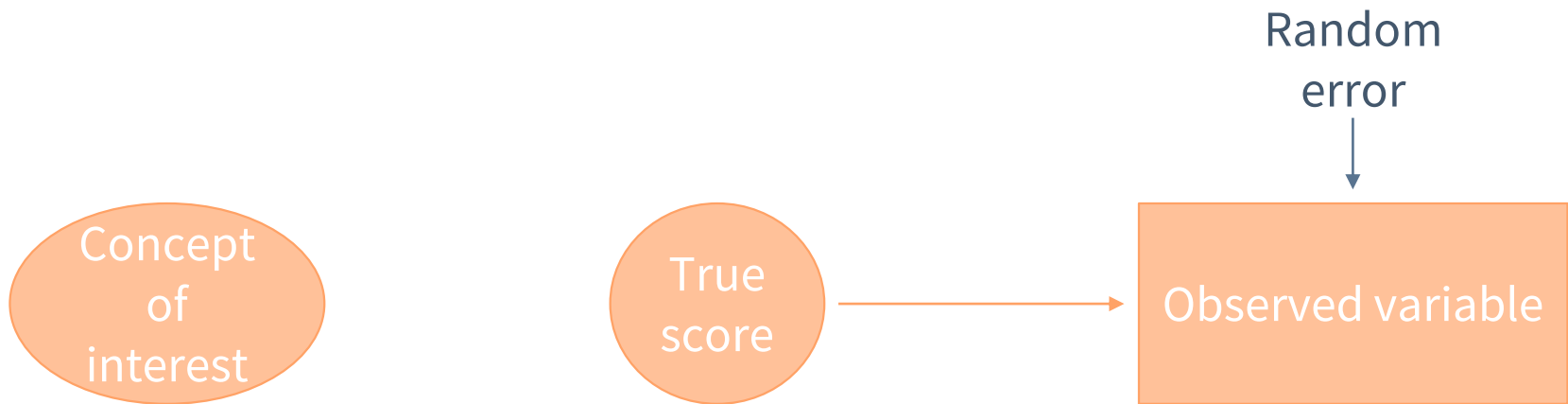
Observed variable

However, this is not the case as there is always measurement error. There can be two types of measurement error. **Random errors** occur due to chance or mistake and lead to having to distinguish between the observed variable and the true score.

Measurement Error

Systematic error

Random error

Concept of interest

True score
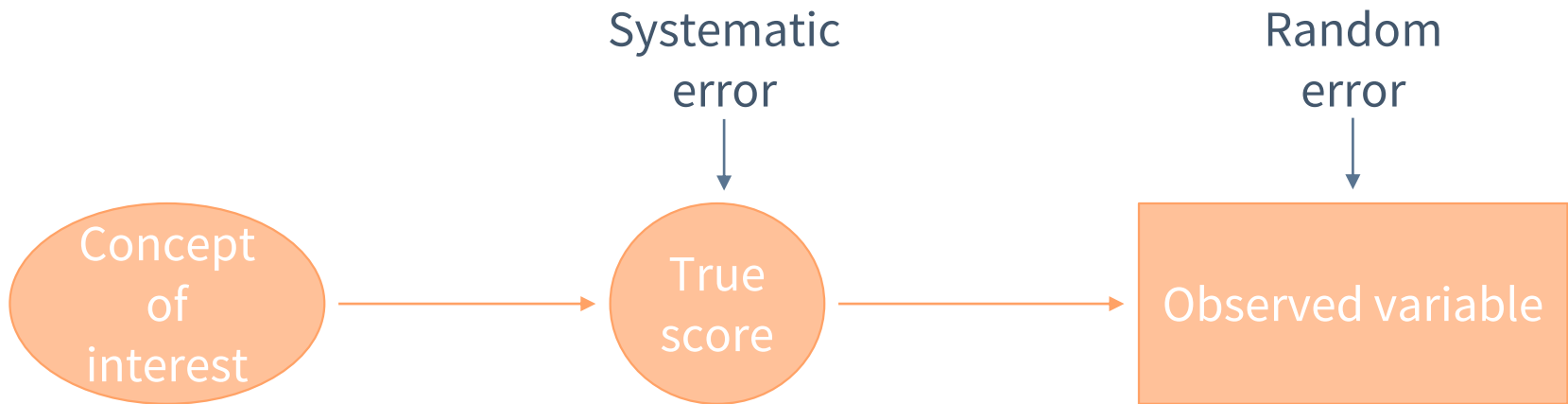
Observed variable

Systematic errors affect the relationship between the true score and the concept of interest. They may occur when the observed responses do not only represent the concept of interest and random errors but also other variables (e.g., systematic differences in understanding the question due to gender).

Measurement Error
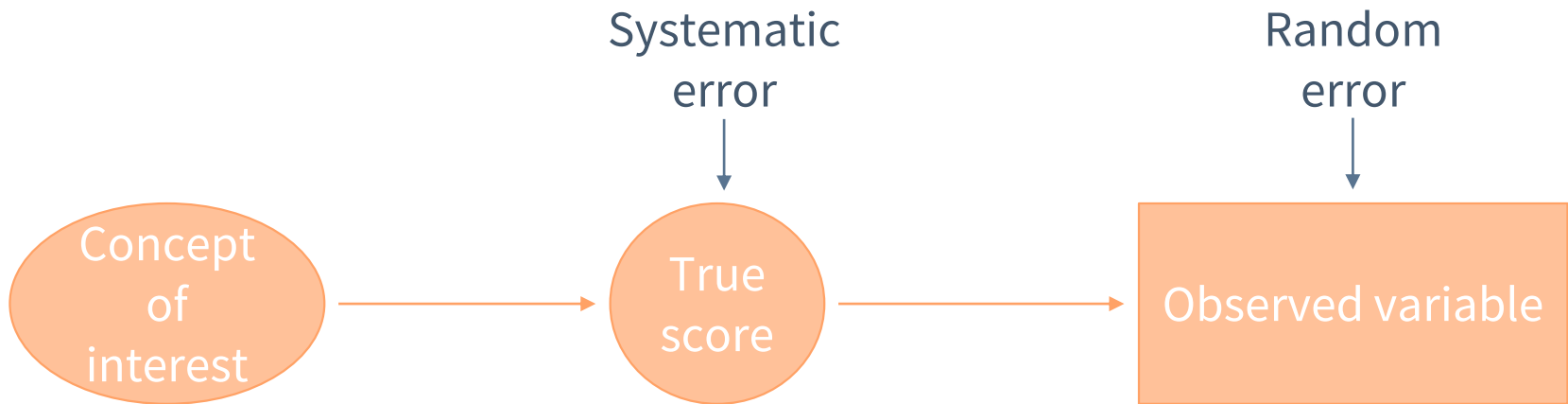
This is also known as the **True Score Model** by Willem E. Saris and Frank M. Andrews (1991).

Religiosity

Religiosity

Charles Y. Glock (2006) proposes a multi-dimensional approach to **religiosity**. He argues that the dimensions are neither unilateral nor that a single indicator is sufficient to distinguish religious orientation within one dimension. The dimensions are:

1) Religious belief (ideological dimension)
2) Religious practice (ritualistic dimension)
3) Religious feeling (experiential dimension)
4) Religious knowledge (intellectual dimension)
5) Religious effects (consequential dimension)
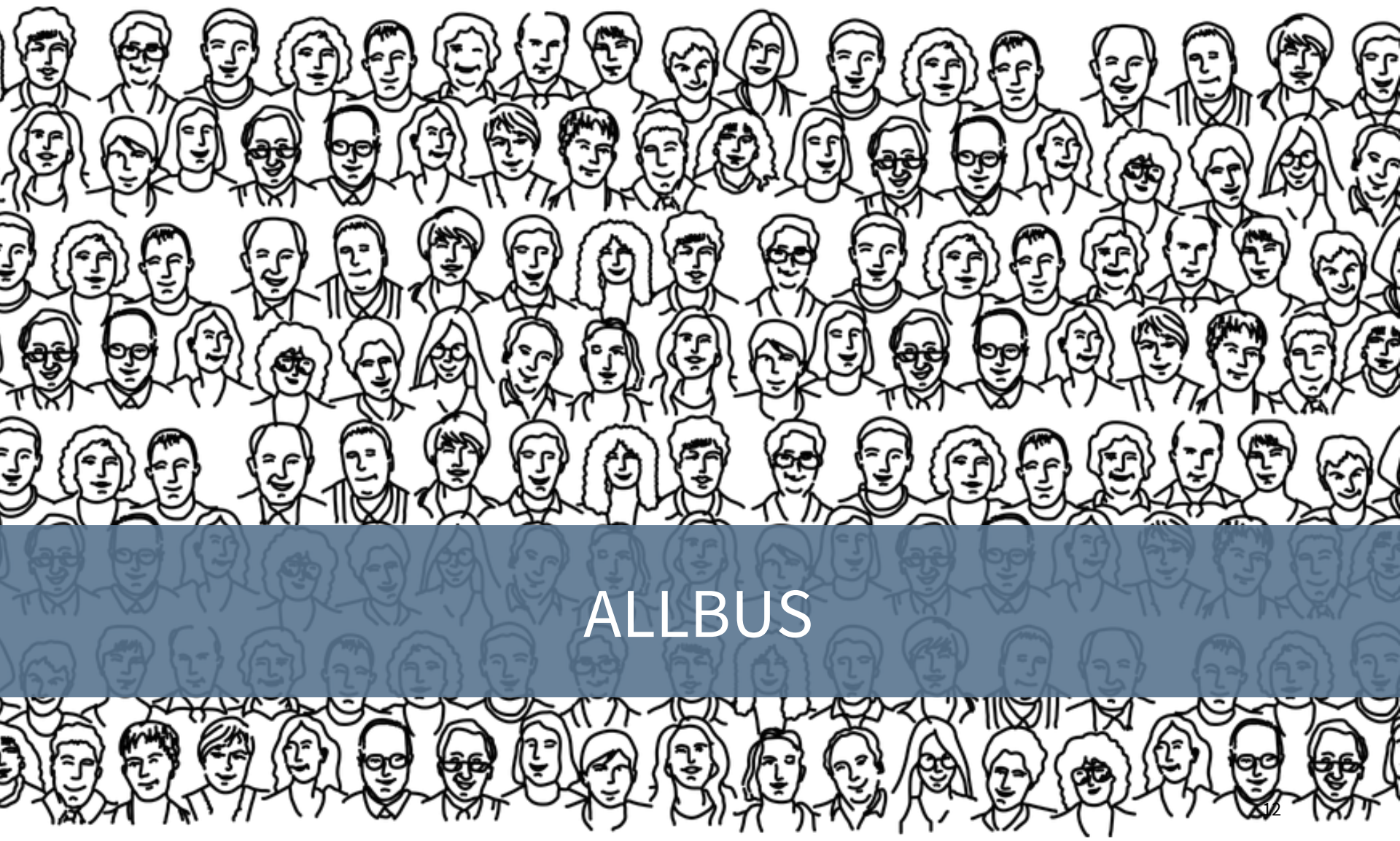
ALLBUS

ALLBUS

The **German General Social Survey** (Allgemeine Bevölkerungsumfrage der Sozialwissenschaften = ALLBUS) is a biennial survey of social and political attitudes, behaviors, and social structure of people residing in Germany that has been conducted since 1980. The survey uses face-to-face interviews and combines a permanent core of replicated questions with changing topical modules. The data can be used for a variety of analytical purposes:

- Cross-sectional analysis
- Longitudinal analysis (ALLBUS time series, replicated questions from other survey studies)
- International comparative analysis (includes questions from the American General Social Survey = GSS and the International Social Survey Programme = ISSP)
- Examination of methodical issues (e.g., context effects, question effects, non-response)

Data Access

To get an **overview** of all available ALLBUS studies, check out this publication.

ALLBUS documentation materials and data sets can be found here.

The **Research Data Center ALLBUS** provides information on available ALLBUS datasets on its website. To download the ALLBUS data, registration (for public use files) is required. Additionally, ALLBUS provides supplementary data (e.g., regional data, small-scale geodata, methodological data) that cannot be included in the regular public use files because of data protection concerns. This sensitive data can be made available for analyses subject to special contractual regulations with the GESIS Secure Data Center (SDC).

Questions about the ALLBUS data? Ask here: allbus@gesis.org.

Related Studies, Links, and Media

Stavrova & Siegers (2014)

Article

Religious Prosociality and Morality Across Cultures: How Social Enforcement of Religion Shapes the Effects of Personal Religiosity on Prosocial and Moral Attitudes and Behaviors

Olga Stavrova[1] and Pascal Siegers[2]

Abstract
The question of whether religiosity is linked to prosocial behavior is currently hotly debated in psychology. This research contributes to this debate by showing that the nature of individuals' religious orientations and their relationships to prosociality depend on their country's social enforcement of religiosity. Our analyses of data from more than 70 countries indicate that in countries with no social pressure to follow a religion, religious individuals are more likely to endorse an intrinsic religious orientation (Study 1), engage in charity work (Study 2), disapprove of lying in their own interests (Study 3), and are less likely to engage in fraudulent behaviors (Study 4) compared with non-religious individuals. Ironically, in secular contexts, religious individuals are also more likely to condemn certain moral choices than non-religious individuals (Study 2). These effects of religiosity substantially weaken (and ultimately disappear) with increasing national levels of social enforcement of religiosity.

Keywords
religiosity, prosocial and antisocial behavior, moral attitudes, self-determination theory, culture

https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/0146167213510951

16

Siegers (2021)

The Religious Become Tolerant

The Changing Relationship Between Religiosity and Anti-Immigrant Attitudes in Germany From 1980 to 2016

Abstract

The present study investigates whether the relationship between religiosity and anti-immigrant attitudes has changed between 1980 and 2016 in Germany. Based on the intrinsic religiosity thesis (Siegers, Köln Z Soziol Sozialpsychol 71:491–517, 2019), I assume that the decreasing social importance of religion in Germany strengthened the alignment between Churches' message of tolerance and attitudes of religious individuals. If this is true, religiosity should become more associated with positive attitudes towards immigrants. I apply this argument not only to the direct effect of religiosity but also to the indirect effect mediated via contacts with foreigners. I assume that secularization reduces the preference for homophily of religious individuals. Moreover, I expect that the change is more pronounced in West Germany because secularization is already more advanced in East Germany. I analyse the data from the longitudinal data file of the German General Social Survey covering the period from 1980 to 2016 for West Germany and from 1994 to 2016 for East Germany. The results of the moderated mediation model show that there has been a substantial change in the relationship between individual religiosity and anti-immigrant attitudes in West Germany. While in the 1980s church-goers in West Germany tended to be more sceptical about immigrants than the non-religious, this relationship reversed over time: the religious became tolerant. Today, going to church is associated with less anti-immigrant attitudes. Moreover, an indirect effect of religiosity mediated via contacts with foreigners has disappeared over time indicating that the religious preference for homophily decreased. The change is less pronounced in East Germany where over the whole observation period church-goers had more contacts with foreigners than the non-religious leading to more tolerant attitudes.

https://link.springer.com/chapter/10.1007/978-3-658-32627-2_6#citeas

17

Methodenbericht

gesis Leibniz-Institut für Sozialwissenschaften

TECHNICAL *Reports* 2014|22

Konzeption und Durchführung der „Allgemeinen Bevölkerungsumfrage der Sozialwissenschaften"

(ALLBUS) 2012

Martina Wasmer, Michael Blohm, Jessica Walter, Evi Scholz, Regina Jutz

Religionsmessung im ALLBUS [Methodenbericht](#) der 2012er Welle

Invited Expert

Religiosity Research

Dr. Pascal Siegers

is head of the ALLBUS Research Data Center at GESIS. He is specialized in religiosity research, georeferencing of survey design, and research data infrastructures.

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Click here for a list of interesting publications on religiosity by Pascal Siegers and his colleagues.

References and Sources

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