

10th International Conference of Panel Data Users in Switzerland

Workshop - Religion and Religiosity

Title

Chances and Risks of Interreligious Couples in the Context of their Religiosity

Author

Michael Acckert, University of Bern University of Bern, Faculty of Theology, Institute for Empirical Studies on Religions

Abstract

According to the social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) people have an in-group affirmation bias and an out-group rejection bias which leads to stable group affiliations. In religions an important social component emphasizes the belonging to a specific community. If people cross the border of the in-group especially for the sake of a long-lasting relationship with a member of an out-group, they on one hand can face social isolation from the community and on the other hand take on new ways of handling the norms of the partner's religious community. This strongly applies for interreligious couples. Flipping the coin of the public domain of religiosity shows the private relationship with a deity which can work out as a resource for a couple and bolster it in the course of a relationship.

Prayer and meditation are indicators for personal religiosity, attendance of religious services as indicator for social religiosity respectively. Manifestations of the relationship quality are formed from the emotional and practical support of the partner. First eleven waves are taken into account for the analysis as all the indicators are constantly present in the SHP during this time. The multilevel analysis disentangles the private and social components of faith life and their effect on the relationship quality of interreligious couples as models for bridge builders in a religiously multifaceted society.

Result show that relationship has a powerful adaptation effect on private and social religiosity which leads to a diverging of the religiosity in both partners in general. In-group/out-group transitions strike the emotional and practical support in couples. Women adopt to partner's level of religiosity at large faster than men. For both woman and man time and relationship duration have an overall positive effect on private and social religiosity.