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Title

Opening the black box of religiosity: the core dimensions, attitudes, self-concepts, and centrality of religiosity

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Abstract

From its inception in 1999 until 2009, the SHP integrated three indicators of religiosity each year (religious affiliation, frequency of church attendance and prayer). After 2009, the programme switched to a rotating module of religiosity, which has been in use every three years since 2012, and which has so far provided data from two measuring points. In addition to the three items of religiosity mentioned above, 13 new indicators have been added to the new module. This allows differentiated analyses regarding the development of the inner structure and effects of religiosity.

This paper presents the potentials of the new module of religiosity. First, an outline of the new module's theoretical background and systematics is provided (Stark & Glock, 1968; Allport & Ross, 1967; Huber, 2003, 2009; Huber & Huber, 2012). An important distinction is made here between the core dimensions, attitudes, self-concepts and centrality of (personal and social) religiosity. The empirical part presents findings on the stability, reliability and inner coherence of the individual indicators, and the indices derived from them.

In addition, the paper discusses the development of religiosity across people's life courses. The findings show a very high stability and reliability of the core dimensions and the derived indexes of the centrality of religiosity, as well as the centrality of personal and social religiosity. Furthermore, the data reveal that all core dimensions contribute relatively autonomously to the explanation of people's religious and spiritual self-concept, as well as of the changes that occurred between 2012 and 2015.

Finally, the paper presents and discusses age effects on the basis of a panel regression. In terms of the dimensions of prayer and worship, there is a significant increase in religiosity over the period of ten years. This can also be demonstrated for the three years from 2012 to 2015 with regard to the centrality of religiosity.