

Article

The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS)

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Abstract: The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) is a measure of the centrality, importance or salience of religious meanings in personality that has been applied yet in more than 100 studies in sociology of religion, psychology of religion and religious studies in 25 countries with in total more than 100,000 participants. It measures the general intensities of five theoretical defined core dimensions of religiosity. The dimensions of public practice, private practice, religious experience, ideology and the intellectual dimensions can together be considered as representative for the total of religious live. From a psychological perspective, the five core-dimensions can be seen as channels or modes in which personal religious constructs are shaped and activated. The activation of religious constructs in personality can be regarded as a valid measure of the degree of religiosity of an individual. The CRS thus derives from the five dimensional measures a combined measure of the centrality of religiosity which is suitable also for interreligious studies. The paper presents the theoretical basis and rationale of its construction with different versions of the CRS in 20 languages with norm values for 21 countries. Furthermore, the paper presents versions of different extension and describes specific modifications that were developed for studies with Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims.

Keywords: centrality of religiosity; measurement; dimensions; interreligious; religious construct system

1. Introduction

The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) is a measure of the centrality, importance or salience of religious meanings in personality. It has been developed by Huber [1–5] and has yet been applied in more than 100 studies in sociology of religion, psychology of religion and religious studies in 25 countries with in total more than 100,000 participants. The largest single application is in the global Religion Monitor with representative samples in 21 countries [6]. However, no comprehensive overview on the scale comprising a base for its practical application is yet available in English. The present paper aims to close this desideratum. It consists of four parts: first we introduce the basic ideas and construction principles of the CRS, second we sketch the model of religiosity on which the CRS is based on. Third, we provide a taxonomy of the different versions of the CRS. Finally, norm values from 21 nations are provided.

2. Basic Ideas and Construction Principles

General measures of religiosity refer to its intensity, salience, importance or centrality in the individual. Most common are single item scales asking for a self report on the subjective importance of religion or the salience of religious identity, e.g., ‘How important is religion for you’ or ‘How religious do you consider yourself’. These allow the most economical assessment of the general intensity of religiosity. However, there are at least two fundamental problems with this approach. First, the reliability of one item measures is undefined. Second, also the validity of such measures is debatable, because it remains unclear which criteria a respondent assesses in order to produce the response. The answer may have been generated based on belief, private religious practice, interest in religious questions, or the affiliation to a religious community. Thus, different respondents may generate their assessment based on different criteria.

The centrality scale takes an inverse approach: It asks for the general intensities of theoretical defined core dimensions of religiosity which can be considered as representative for the total of religious live and derives from them a combined measure of the centrality of religiosity. This measurement strategy is based on two prerequisites. First is the problem of representativeness. A theoretically founded decision has to be made of which expressions of religiosity are representative for the whole of religious life. Second is the problem of generalizability of the religious content targeted by the indicators. Contents have to be identified that are meaningful and acceptable in most religious traditions allowing for transreligious generalization of the measure.

2.1. Identification of Dimensions of Religiosity

With respect to the first problem of the identification of representative dimensions of religiosity, the CRS refers to the multidimensional model of religion by Charles Glock [7,8]. Glock’s approach is originated in sociology of religion. He defined five core dimensions of religion constituting a general frame of reference for empirical research: the intellectual, the ideological, the ritualistic, the experiential, and the consequential dimension. In 1968, Stark and Glock eliminated the consequential dimension from the model and split the ritualistic dimension into public and private practice, thus maintaining five dimensions [9]. The approach of Glock was centered on religious institutions and

social expectations. For instance, “The intellectual dimension has to do with the expectation that the religious person will be informed and knowledgeable about the basic tenets of his faith and its sacred scriptures.” ([8], p. 11) or “The experiential dimension gives recognition to the fact that all religions have certain expectations, however imprecisely they may be stated, that the religious person will at one time or another achieve direct knowledge of ultimate reality or will experience religious emotion.” ([8], p. 10). There are two major achievements of Glocks model with respect to earlier conceptualizations: first is the theoretical discussion of the problem of the universal frame of reference for empirical research on religion and religiosity. Second is the identification of a limited set of core dimensions which cover the general scope of religious life. The five core dimensions, while being developed from a sociological perspective, do also cover religiosity from a psychological perspective as they denote distinguishable psychological modes of the representation of religious contents. The intellectual and ideological dimensions refer to thought, the dimensions of public and private practice refer to action, and the experiential dimension refers to experience, emotion and perception. Thus they can be considered as representative for religiosity from both perspectives, the sociological perspective reflecting social expectations as well as for the psychological representation of religious contents.

2.2. Generalizability of Religious Contents

The second problem is the generalizability of the religious contents used for the operationalization of the five core dimensions. In his empirical investigations, Glock focused on North American Christianity (e.g., [9]), hence the indicators with which the multidimensional model was investigated have a Christian bias and contradict his theoretical claim of universality. This threatens the generalizability of the measure as well as of the results. A more practical problem of some operationalizations of the Glock model is the lack of distinction between the five core dimensions. Weigert and Thomas [10] showed this paradigmatically in their critics of the operationalization of the Glock model by Faulkner and DeJong [11]. In this questionnaire most items measuring other dimensions were confounded with the dimension of religious ideology (see [1], pp 136–144 for an in-depth discussion).

To overcome these restrictions, two principles for an universal operationalization of the five core dimensions should be considered [1]. First, items should be strongly related to typical expressions of the respective dimensions. For instance, the intellectual dimension should only refer to processes or results of intellectual activities but not to the belief in these results. The experiential dimension, e.g., should refer to situations in which direct contact with an ultimate reality is perceived but not to attitudes towards such experiences. Second, to provide generalizability, the religious contents measured should be as general as possible and should be relevant and meaningful in the context of different religious traditions.

Within the realm of Christian religiosity, a multitude of studies investigated Glock’s model and confirmed the factors. Additional confirmation has been found also in studies not referring to Glock’s model. In a meta-analysis of sociological studies, most of the factors found could be re-categorized in Glock’s dimensions [1,12]. Additionally, it has been shown that the religious indicators applied in the international survey programme ISSP refer to one of the Glock dimensions each [13]. Furthermore, all five dimensions are necessary to describe religiosity because they are relatively autonomous, *i.e.*, they

may not be predicted with sufficient accuracy from each other [1]. These findings strongly support Glock's claim that the five core dimensions allow representative measurement of a broad scope of religious life. Thus, in order to assess the religiosity of a person, it is necessary to measure all 5 dimensions.

2.3. The Problem of the General Importance of Religiosity

Glock's model, however, does not address the general importance of religion for the individual as conceptualized by one-item scales. Hence, the relation between the postulated multidimensional structure of religiosity and the general importance of religion remains unclear.

A first attempt to solve this problem was undertaken by Wimberly [14] referring to identity theory of Stryker [15] and exchange theory of Homans [16]. Wimberley assumes that the pattern of the five dimensions in the individual depends on two factors: first on the salience of the religious identity and second on the ratio of costs and rewards of religious life in the realms of the five dimensions. In the case of high identity salience he expects a strong intrinsic religious motivation which determines all or nearly all facets of the religious life of the individual. As a result of this strong and unifying cause, the five dimensions of religiosity lose their relative autonomy. They should be similarly high developed regardless of their costs and rewards. In the contrasting case of low salience of religious identity the unifying causation of religious life by an intrinsic motivation is missing. As a result the pattern of five dimensions depends mainly on the different ratios of the costs and rewards, which are connected with these dimensions causing a high degree of relative autonomy. On the basis of these considerations Wimberley hypothesized that in empirical studies the relative autonomy of the five dimensions depends on the share of respondents with a low or medium salience of the religious identity. The higher this share is the greater the measured relative autonomy of the five dimensions should be. In the border case of a sample in which most of the respondents have a very salient religious identity, no autonomy of the dimensions should be detectable. Unfortunately, Wimberly never tested this hypothesis empirically.

3. Revision of the Five-Dimensional Model of Religiosity

A second proposal for the clarification of the relation between the five core-dimensions of religiosity and the general importance of religion was made by Huber [1]. He approaches the problem from the perspective of personality psychology inspired by ideas of Allport and Ross [17] and Kelly [18], suggesting the concept of the personal religious construct-system as the unifying psychological entity in which the core-dimensions merge. Referring to Kelly's personality theory a personal construct is a pattern for the anticipation of events. Accordingly the personal system of religious constructs can be defined as a superstructure in personality which consists of all personal constructs which are related to the individually defined realm of religion and religiosity. A personal religious construct is activated when the individual anticipates something with a religious meaning. In relation to this approach, the five core-dimensions can be seen as channels or modes in which personal religious constructs are activated.

The interplay between the sociologically defined core-dimensions and the psychologically defined personal religious construct-system can be described as follows:

- From a sociological perspective, the **intellectual dimension** refers to the social expectation that religious people have some knowledge of religion, and that they can explain their views on transcendence, religion and religiosity. In the personal religious construct system this dimension is represented as themes of interest, hermeneutical skills, styles of thought and interpretation, and as bodies of knowledge. A general indicator for the intellectual dimension is the frequency of thinking about religious issues. It indicates how often religious contents are “updated” through the medium of thinking, which leads into the heart of the intellectual dimension. Furthermore, the content of this indicator is independent of any confessional bias or religious affiliation. It can therefore be applied across religions.
- The dimension of **ideology** refers to the social expectation that religious individuals have beliefs regarding the existence and the essence of a transcendent reality and the relation between the transcendence and human. In the personal religious construct system this dimension is represented as beliefs, unquestioned convictions and patterns of plausibility. General indicators of this dimension should focus only on the aspect of the plausibility of the existence of a transcendent reality, e.g., “To what extent do you believe in the existence of God or something divine”. This “basic-belief” is common to most religious traditions, because it is a prerequisite for all further concepts and dogmas concerning the essence of this reality. Once a respondent considers transcendent reality as plausible, specific constructions of transcendence as prevalent in different traditions can become psychologically relevant.
- The dimension of **public practice** refers to the social expectation that religious individuals belong to religious communities which is manifested in the public participation in religious rituals and in communal activities. In the personal religious construct system this dimension is represented as patterns of action and as a sense of belonging with respect to a certain social body as well as to a certain ritualized imagination of the transcendence. The general intensity of this dimension can be measured easily by inquiring about the frequency with which somebody takes part in religious services. In interreligious studies it is recommendable to vary the label for religious service according to the religious affiliation of the respondents—e.g. “church attendance” for Christians, and “Friday prayer” for Muslims.
- The dimension of **private practice** refers to the social expectation that religious individuals devote themselves to the transcendence in individualized activities and rituals in private space. In the personal religious construct system this dimension is represented as patterns of action and a personal style of devotion to the transcendence. It makes sense to consider both prayer and meditation when measuring the general intensity of private practices, because they express basic and irreducible forms of addressing oneself to transcendence. Inherent to the structure of prayer is the act of addressing a “counterpart.” This dynamic implies a dialogical pattern of spirituality. In contrast, meditation is structured more fundamentally with reference to the self and/or an all-pervasive principle, and is therefore more in line with a participative pattern of spirituality. Considering both forms of private religious practice means that both basic patterns of spirituality are covered.
- The dimension of **religious experience** refers to the social expectation that religious individuals have “some kind of direct contact to an ultimate reality” ([9], p. 126) which affects them emotionally. In the personal religious construct system this dimension is represented as patterns

of religious perceptions and as a body of religious experiences and feelings. Analogously to private practice, two basic forms of experiencing the transcendence can be distinguished, “one-to-one experiences” which correspond to a dialogical spirituality pattern and “experiences of being at one” corresponding to a participative one. Hence, we recommend the use of both expressions of religious experience for the measurement of its general intensity.

As discussed above, the five core-dimensions can be seen as representative for the whole of religious life. This is the key for the construction of the CRS. It rests on two assumptions:

1. The measurement of the general intensity of the five core-dimensions allows a representative estimation of the frequency and intensity of the activation of the personal religious construct system.
2. The probability of a central position of the religious construct-system in personality increases with the overall intensity and frequency of its activation.

3.1. Construct Validity of the CRS

It is important to keep in mind that the construction of the CRS follows a probabilistic logic. This means, that in general individuals with higher scores on the CRS have a more central religious construct system. The validity of this measurement strategy was confirmed empirically. There are very high correlations between the CRS and self reports of the salience of the religious identity, which are traditionally applied as one item scales for religiosity. They amount to 0.83 in a students' sample [1,2] and 0.73 in the international Religion Monitor [19]. Furthermore, there are also high correlations between CRS values and self-reports of the importance of religion for daily life, with coefficients of 0.78 in a students' sample [1,2] and 0.67 in the international Religion Monitor [19].

An alternative way to validate the CRS consists in the test of differential predictions for categorical groups of respondents based on their CRS-score. Huber [1–5] distinguishes between the groups of the “highly-religious” with a central position of the religious construct system in the individual, the “religious” with a subordinated position of the personal religious construct system and the “non-religious” with hardly any religious construct system (see [3], pp. 36–38 and [4], pp. 44–48, for an in-depth discussion of the categorization in three groups and the resulting strategies for empirical research). Theoretically it can be expected that the group of the “highly religious” differ at least in two constitutive features from the two other groups. First, in the group of the “highly-religious” the system of personal religious constructs should be much more differentiated than in the groups of the “religious” and “non-religious” (thesis of differentiation). Second, religious contents, e.g., the experience of forgiveness by God, which are salient in the religious construct system of the “highly-religious”, should have a much stronger relevance for general psychological dispositions, e.g., the willingness to forgive others in social situations, than in the groups of the “religious” and “non-religious” (thesis of relevance). Both predictions were already tested empirically. The thesis of differentiation was confirmed in relation to the theological complexity of positive and negative religious emotions [4]. The thesis of relevance was confirmed in relation to the political relevance of religious concepts [4,5], and in relation to social relevance of the experience of forgiveness by God [3,20].

4. Versions of the Centrality Scale

The centrality scale is available in different versions (see Table 1 with the latest revised items in English, Table 2 for the German original versions; versions in 19 languages are available online <http://www.theol.unibe.ch/ipt/huber.html>). They differ first in economics of measurement, and second in range of inter-religious applicability. All versions operationalize the before mentioned five core dimensions on a most general level with items that measure either the objective or subjective frequency, or the intensity of the activation of personal religious constructs specific to the modi of the dimensions. Wherever possible, objective frequencies were asked (items 03, 04, and 04b in Tables 1 and 2). These items consider religious practice which in most religions traditions are undertaken regularly and are easily accessible in frequency format. For events that may occur less regularly, subjective frequencies were asked in five levels (never, rarely, occasionally, often, and very often). The different frequency formats require the recoding of the objective frequencies into the five levels of the subjective frequencies (see Table 2 for the recoding procedure). For items where frequencies have little meaning as e.g., the belief in something divine, its intensity or importance is assessed in five levels (not at all, not very much, moderately, quite a bit, and very much so).

4.1. Length of the CRS Versions

The basic scale is provided in three lengths with 15 (CRS-15), with 10 (CRS-10) and with 5 items (CRS-5). These versions suitable at least for Abrahamic religions (Judaism, Christianity, Islam) are nested in each other and grow more economical (see Tables 1 and 2). The original versions with 10 or 15 items with a slightly different wording in some items is documented in several publications [1–3]. The modifications are explained below. The CRS-15 has three items per dimension. It is the version with the highest dimensional discriminance, *i.e.*, it allows the measurement of the core dimensions with the highest reliability and accuracy and thus is best being applied if the differential influence of the dimensions on other phenomena is of interest. In three studies reliabilities of the individual dimensions ranged from 0.80 to 0.93, and from 0.92 to 0.96 for the whole CRS-15 [3]. The CRS-10 is a reduced and more economical version containing only two questions per dimension (reliability in eight studies from 0.89 to 0.94; [2]). Selected were the items which had the respectively highest theoretical relevance to the respective dimensions. The CRS-5 is the most economical version.

Table 1. Items and versions of the Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS)—English versions.

| Dimension | Items for both the basic and interreligious versions | Basic CRS versions | | | Additional Items for the interreligious versions only | Interreligious CRSi versions | | |
|------------------|---|--------------------|--------|--------|--|------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Intellect | 01: How often do you think about religious issues? | CRS-5 | CRS-10 | CRS-15 | 04b: How often do you meditate? 05b: How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that you are in one with all? | CRSi-7 | CRSi-14 | CRSi-20 |
| Ideology | 02: To what extent do you believe that God or something divine exists? | | | | | | | |
| Public practice | 03: How often do you take part in religious services? | | | | | | | |
| Private practice | 04: How often do you pray? | | | | | | | |
| Experience | 05: How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine intervenes in your life? | | | | | | | |
| Intellect | 06: How interested are you in learning more about religious topics? | | | | 09b: How important is meditation for you? 10b: How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that you are touched by a divine power? | | | |
| Ideology | 07: To what extend do you believe in an afterlife—e.g. immortality of the soul, resurrection of the dead or reincarnation? | | | | | | | |
| Public practice | 08: How important is to take part in religious services? | | | | | | | |
| Private practice | 09: How important is personal prayer for you? | | | | | | | |
| Experience | 10: How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine wants to communicate or to reveal something to you? | | | | | | | |
| Intellect | 11: How often do you keep yourself informed about religious questions through radio, television, internet, newspapers, or books? | | | | 14b: How often do you try to connect to the divine spontaneously when inspired by daily situations? | | | |
| Ideology | 12: In your opinion, how probable is it that a higher power really exists | | | | | | | |
| Public practice | 13: How important is it for you to be connected to a religious community? | | | | | | | |
| Private practice | 14: How often do you pray spontaneously when inspired by daily situations? | | | | | | | |
| Experience | 15: How often do you experience situations in which you have the feeling that God or something divine is present? | | | | | | | |

Table 2. Items and versions of the Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS)—Original German versions.

| Dimension | Items for both the basic and interreligious versions | Basic CRS versions | | | Additional Items for the interreligious versions only | Interreligious CRSi versions | | |
|------------------|--|--------------------|--------|--------|--|------------------------------|---------|---------|
| Intellect | 01: Wie oft denken Sie über religiöse Fragen nach? | CRS-5 | CRS-10 | CRS-15 | 04b: Wie häufig meditieren Sie? 05b: Wie oft erleben Sie Situationen, in denen Sie das Gefühl haben, mit Allem Eins zu sein? | CRSi-7 | CRSi-14 | CRSi-20 |
| Ideology | 02: Wie stark glauben Sie daran, dass Gott oder etwas Göttliches existiert? | | | | | | | |
| Public practice | 03: Wie häufig nehmen Sie an Gottesdiensten teil? | | | | | | | |
| Private practice | 04: Wie häufig beten Sie? | | | | | | | |
| Experience | 05: Wie oft erleben Sie Situationen, in denen Sie das Gefühl haben, dass Gott oder etwas Göttliches in Ihr Leben eingreift? | | | | | | | |
| Intellect | 06: Wie stark interessieren Sie sich dafür, mehr über religiöse Themen zu erfahren? | | | | 09b: Wie wichtig ist für Sie Meditation? 10b: Wie oft erleben Sie Situationen, in denen Sie das Gefühl haben, dass Sie von einer göttlichen Kraft berührt werden? | | | |
| Ideology | 07: Wie stark glauben Sie daran, dass es ein Leben nach dem Tod gibt?—z.B. Unsterblichkeit der Seele, Auferstehung von den Toten oder Reinkarnation? | | | | | | | |
| Public practice | 08: Wie wichtig ist Ihnen die Teilnahme an Gottesdiensten? | | | | | | | |
| Private practice | 09: Wie wichtig ist für Sie das persönliche Gebet? | | | | | | | |
| Experience | 10: Wie oft erleben Sie Situationen, in denen Sie das Gefühl haben, dass Gott oder etwas Göttliches Ihnen etwas sagen oder zeigen will? | | | | | | | |
| Intellect | 11: Wie oft informieren Sie sich durch Radio, Fernsehen, Internet, Zeitschriften oder Bücher über religiöse Fragen? | | | | 14b: Wie oft suchen Sie mitten in Ihrem Alltag Kontakt zu einer göttlichen Kraft? | | | |
| Ideology | 12: Wie hoch ist Ihrer Ansicht nach die Wahrscheinlichkeit, dass es eine höhere Macht gibt? | | | | | | | |
| Public practice | 13: Wie wichtig ist Ihnen die Verbindung zu einer religiösen Gemeinschaft? | | | | | | | |
| Private practice | 14: Wie oft richten Sie mitten in Ihrem Alltag ein kurzes Gebet an Gott? | | | | | | | |
| Experience | 15: Wie oft erleben Sie Situationen, in denen Sie das Gefühl haben, dass Gott oder etwas Göttliches anwesend ist? | | | | | | | |

4.2. Application to Different Religious Traditions

Recently, the scale was modified and extended in order to enhance its scope of applicability [3,4]. The scale was originally developed to measure religiosity in the context of the Abrahamic tradition with a monotheistic concept of God (Judaism, Christianity, and Islam). In these religions a dialogic pattern of spirituality in which God is perceived as a counterpart of man is dominant. However, in the realm of eastern religious traditions and new western forms of spirituality meditation and mystical experience are of greater relevance. This reflects a more participative pattern of spirituality in which the divine is perceived of as an inherent principle of the self as well as of the universe. Therefore, two types of modifications were undertaken. First, in the basic CRS items in which the concept of ‘God’ is mentioned it was replaced by the more general expression ‘God or something divine’.¹ This is the case in the items 02, 05, 10, and 15. It is noteworthy that this modification was undertaken for all versions of the CRS, including the basic versions. Second, specifically for the interreligious versions of the CRS additional items reflecting a participative pattern of spirituality were included for the measurement of the dimensions of private practice and experience. These are items 04b and 05b for CRSi-7, items 09b and 10b for CRSi-14, and item 14b for CRSi-20. In the scaling procedure alternatively the basic (e.g., 04) or of the additional item (e.g., 04b) is used, with the item with the higher score entering the total score of the respective CRSi-version. This allows the measurement of the respective dimension (and the centrality value) adaptive to the specific spirituality pattern of the individual respondent. We assume that the respective dimension is expressed according to the higher value of the respective two items. The CRSi-7 reached a high internal consistence of 0.84 (Cronbach’s Alpha) in the Religion Monitor [4].

4.3. Special Items for Different Religious Groups

In surveys with Buddhists, Hindus, and Muslims, specific modifications of the CRS were developed. For Buddhists or Hindus—reflecting their openness for polytheistic concepts and practices (at least in the respective religious folk traditions)—the term ‘God or something divine’ in items 02, 05, 10, and 15 should be extended to ‘God, deities or something divine’. This enhances the scope of personal religious constructs that can be measured in the ideological and experiential dimensions. For Muslims, two specific modifications are recommended: First, in Islam there is a differentiation between obligatory prayer (Salat) and private prayer (Du’a). To ensure the comparability of the frequency and importance of the private prayer dimension with the respective measurements for other religions, in surveys investigating Muslims the value for (Du’a) should be considered in the calculation of the centrality score. However, it is important first to ask for the frequency and importance of the obligatory prayer (Salat) in the questionnaire, and only thereafter for the private prayer (Du’a) in order to make the item unambiguous. The second modification concerns the dimension of religious

¹ Furthermore, in the two ideological item 02 and 07 the reference to the probability of the existence of God or of an afterlife was replaced by the reference to belief (see [1–3]). This was undertaken in order to ease the understanding of the questions, as research on probabilities has shown that many people do not understand the concept and may not properly deal with probabilities (e.g., [21]). The new versions thus provide more unambiguous references and enhance reliability specifically in respondents with low numeracy.

experience. Here, many Muslim respondents may perceive the idea of a direct contact with God as a violation of the Islamic concept of the absolute sovereignty of God. To avoid possible irritations we recommend a more reserved description of divine actions in items 05 and 10: Instead of “intervenes in your life” (item 05) we recommend “**allows for an intervention** in your life”, and instead of “wants to communicate or to reveal something to you” (item 10) we recommend “**lets something be communicated or revealed** to you”.

4.4. Coding of Frequencies of Religious Behaviors

The items scores are 1 to 5 for these with 5 answer options, for the items concerning prayer, meditation, and religious services the answers are coded according to Table 3. In the calculation of the CRS score, the item sum score is divided through the number of scored scale items. This allows for a range of the CRS score between 1.0 and 5.0. For the categorization of the groups of the “highly-religious”, “religious”, and “non-religious” we propose the following thresholds: 1.0 to 2.0: not-religious, 2.1 to 3.9: religious, 4.0 to 5.0: highly-religious. For an extensive theoretical and empirical discussion of the categorization see [1], pp. 257–264; [2], pp. 93–99; [3], pp. 220–227; [4]. Alternatively, the thresholds can be understood in an intuitive manner derived from the wording of the five levels of the frequency and intensity response scales. These are related to the presence of religious constructs in the personal religious construct system (see Table 4).

Table 3. Recoding of objective frequencies of the items concerning prayer, meditation, and religious services into five score levels.

| Objective frequencies of prayer (personal and obligatory) and meditation | Recoding into five levels | Objective frequencies of participation in religious services | Recoding into five levels |
|--|------------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| A) Several times a day | 5 | A) More than once a week | 5 |
| B) Once a day | | B) Once a week | |
| C) More than once a week | 4 | C) One or three times a month | 4 |
| D) Once a week | 3 | D) A few times a year | 3 |
| E) One or three times a month | | E) Less often | 2 |
| F) A few times a year | 2 | F) Never | 1 |
| G) Less often | | | |
| H) Never | 1 | | |

Table 4. Hermeneutics of the wording a five level answer scale.

| | Score | Wording | | Hermeneutics (presence of personal constructs in personality) |
|---|-------|--------------|---------------|---|
| | | Frequency | Importance | |
| Categories of a five-level answer-scale | 5 | very often | very much so | Clear presence |
| | 4 | often | quite a bit | |
| | 3 | occasionally | moderately | Transition area: background presence |
| | 2 | rarely | not very much | No or only marginal presence |
| | 1 | never | not at all | |

The first two response levels indicate that religious constructs are barely present in an individual. As a result, religious constructs should not become psychologically relevant. For individuals who on average answer within this range thus it is plausible that they can be assigned to the category of the “non-religious”. In contrast, the wording of the response categories four (“often” / “quite a bit”) and five (“very often” / “very much so”) express that religious constructs are clearly present in a personal religious construct system. Consequently, we should assume that they are highly relevant psychologically for that individual's religious experience and behavior and that they exert an influence on non-religious constructs, allowing a categorization of the individual as “highly religious”. The intermediate response category, however, represents the transitional range between absence and clear presence of religious constructs. Responses at this level indicate that religious constructs are present in an individual's life horizon but also that they are not activated very frequent and intense. We thus suggest categorizing these individuals as ‘religious’.

5. Norm Values and Reliabilities in the Religion Monitor

Table 5 shows representative norm values for the CRSi-7 in 21 countries. For Germany four columns are displayed, for the general survey in Germany in total with subsamples for the western and the eastern part, and for a separate sample of the Muslim population in Germany. All norm values are derived from the international Religion Monitor which was conducted in the year 2007 [6].

The internal consistency of the CRS-5 in the total sample of the Religion Monitor is 0.85, that of the CRS-10 is 0.93, and that of the CRSi-7 is 0.84 (Cronbach's Alphas).

6. Conclusions

The Centrality of Religiosity Scale (CRS) is a measure of the centrality, importance or salience of religious meanings in personality. It has been applied yet in different versions in a multitude of studies in sociology of religion, psychology of religion and religious studies in various countries. It measures the general intensities of the five theoretical defined core dimensions of religiosity, public practice, private practice, religious experience, ideology, and the intellectual dimension. They can together be considered as representative for the total of religious live. The paper presents the theoretical basis and rationale of its construction. Different revised versions of the CRS are presented varying in extension. Furthermore, we describe modifications that were developed for studies with Buddhists, Hindus and Muslims in order to provide a comprehensive basis for the application of the CRS also in interreligious studies.

Table 5. Norm values of CRSi-7 (21 countries).

| Country | DE | | | | AT | CH | IT | FR | ES | GB | PL | RU | IL | TR | MA | NG | ID | IN | TH | KR | AU | US | GT | BR |
|-----------------|-----------------|------|------|-------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| | Total | West | East | Musl. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| N | 959 | 759 | 200 | 1945 | 978 | 965 | 959 | 965 | 971 | 885 | 924 | 909 | 885 | 885 | 966 | 993 | 963 | 1048 | 990 | 971 | 979 | 977 | 965 | 985 |
| CRS-score | Percentile rank | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| “not-religious” | 1.0 | 3 | 1 | 10 | | 3 | 1 | | 12 | 2 | 8 | | 6 | 2 | | | | | | 7 | 5 | | | |
| | 1.2 | 7 | 4 | 19 | | 7 | 3 | 1 | 17 | 3 | 12 | | 12 | 4 | | | | | | 14 | 10 | 1 | | |
| | 1.4 | 12 | 6 | 37 | 1 | 11 | 5 | 2 | 26 | 6 | 17 | 1 | 18 | 7 | | | | | | 20 | 15 | 2 | | |
| | 1.6 | 18 | 9 | 50 | 3 | 15 | 7 | 3 | 32 | 8 | 22 | 2 | 26 | 10 | | | | 1 | 25 | 18 | 3 | | | |
| | 1.8 | 21 | 13 | 54 | 5 | 20 | 11 | 5 | 39 | 12 | 29 | 4 | 34 | 14 | | | | 2 | 29 | 23 | 5 | | | 1 |
| | 2.0 | 28 | 19 | 63 | 7 | 25 | 15 | 7 | 43 | 18 | 35 | 5 | 43 | 17 | | | | 1 | 4 | 35 | 28 | 8 | | 2 |
| “religious” | 2.2 | 35 | 26 | 67 | 10 | 31 | 21 | 10 | 47 | 22 | 41 | 7 | 48 | 22 | 1 | | | 2 | 7 | 41 | 34 | 11 | | 3 |
| | 2.4 | 42 | 33 | 76 | 13 | 37 | 28 | 13 | 53 | 27 | 46 | 9 | 55 | 27 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 11 | 46 | 38 | 13 | 1 | 4 |
| | 2.6 | 47 | 39 | 78 | 17 | 43 | 34 | 15 | 58 | 33 | 51 | 12 | 63 | 32 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 19 | 50 | 44 | 16 | 2 | 5 |
| | 2.8 | 53 | 46 | 82 | 22 | 49 | 40 | 19 | 63 | 41 | 56 | 17 | 68 | 37 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 6 | 28 | 53 | 49 | 18 | 2 | 7 |
| | 3.0 | 59 | 52 | 84 | 29 | 56 | 47 | 25 | 68 | 46 | 62 | 21 | 73 | 43 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 10 | 40 | 57 | 55 | 21 | 4 | 8 |
| | 3.2 | 65 | 60 | 86 | 36 | 61 | 55 | 29 | 73 | 52 | 67 | 27 | 78 | 48 | 13 | 10 | 8 | 16 | 52 | 60 | 59 | 23 | 5 | 11 |
| | 3.4 | 69 | 64 | 89 | 44 | 68 | 63 | 36 | 77 | 58 | 71 | 35 | 83 | 53 | 21 | 16 | 1 | 12 | 25 | 65 | 63 | 64 | 27 | 8 |
| | 3.6 | 75 | 71 | 90 | 54 | 73 | 69 | 43 | 82 | 64 | 76 | 43 | 88 | 59 | 31 | 23 | 4 | 20 | 36 | 77 | 66 | 69 | 32 | 12 |
| | 3.8 | 80 | 77 | 92 | 64 | 78 | 75 | 52 | 85 | 71 | 80 | 52 | 91 | 65 | 42 | 32 | 7 | 29 | 48 | 87 | 70 | 73 | 36 | 21 |
| “highly-” | 4.0 | 85 | 82 | 93 | 71 | 84 | 81 | 63 | 89 | 77 | 83 | 63 | 94 | 71 | 55 | 44 | 12 | 41 | 61 | 93 | 75 | 77 | 42 | 34 |
| | 4.2 | 90 | 88 | 96 | 81 | 88 | 86 | 73 | 93 | 83 | 88 | 73 | 97 | 78 | 67 | 56 | 21 | 57 | 74 | 96 | 81 | 82 | 53 | 48 |
| | 4.4 | 93 | 92 | 97 | 88 | 92 | 90 | 82 | 96 | 87 | 92 | 85 | 98 | 82 | 78 | 69 | 36 | 74 | 83 | 98 | 85 | 87 | 65 | 61 |
| | 4.6 | 97 | 96 | 99 | 93 | 95 | 95 | 92 | 98 | 92 | 95 | 95 | 99 | 89 | 91 | 80 | 55 | 88 | 93 | 99 | 90 | 92 | 75 | 87 |
| | 4.8 | 99 | 98 | 100 | 96 | 98 | 98 | 98 | 99 | 97 | 97 | 99 | 100 | 93 | 95 | 90 | 76 | 96 | 96 | 100 | 94 | 95 | 87 | 95 |
| | 5.0 | 100 | 100 | | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |
| <i>M</i> | 2.84 | 3.05 | 2.08 | 3.53 | 2.93 | 3.15 | 3.66 | 2.50 | 3.20 | 2.74 | 3.69 | 2.45 | 3.29 | 3.96 | 4.13 | 4.58 | 4.12 | 3.88 | 3.24 | 2.88 | 2.97 | 3.92 | 4.23 | 4.18 |
| <i>SD</i> | 1.10 | 0.99 | 0.98 | 0.86 | 1.06 | 0.97 | 0.89 | 1.13 | 1.04 | 1.15 | 0.81 | 0.96 | 1.12 | 0.63 | 0.61 | 0.38 | 0.55 | 0.62 | 0.62 | 1.30 | 1.19 | 0.99 | 0.52 | 0.70 |

Legend: DE = Germany (Musl. = Muslims in Germany); AT = Austria; CH = Switzerland; IT = Italy; FR = France; ES = Spain; GB = Great Britain; PL = Poland; RU = Russian Federation; IL = Israel; TR = Turkey; MA = Morocco; NG = Nigeria; ID = Indonesia; IN = India; TH = Thailand; KR = South Korea; AU = Australia; US = United States; GT = Guatemala; BR = Brazil.

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