

Soziologische Vorträge

Mixed Methods

Sommersemester 2018

The Development of a Value Conceptualization Scale. From Focus Groups to Survey Items

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In the light of recent societal challenges – financial crisis, Brexit, refugee crisis, far-right-popular parties on the rise – debates about Austrian and European values have rekindled in the public but also among researchers. Although multiple international surveys have refined the measurement of values over the last decades, there is a disconnection between these surveys and theoretical debates on values and qualitative research on the matter seems almost nonexistent. The present contribution aims to expand (a) the empirical knowledge on values, shedding light onto how people *perceive and relate to their own values* and (b) exemplify and discuss the practicalities of an exploratory sequential mixed methods design.

The project initially collected qualitative data using narrative interviews and focus group discussions. This step ensured openness for new dimensions of relevance and revealed gaps in existing research. These exploratory results guided instrument development, which were refined using a pretest survey, representative online-panel survey and retesting after one year. The resulting scale introduces six bipolar items covering prime dimensions of value conceptualization: 1) the perception of values as guidelines for oneself and others, 2) value relevance in everyday life, 3) value awareness, 4) value stability, 5) the extend by which people should be guided towards the “right” values and 6) the perceived consistency between one’s values.

The presentation closely follows the steps of scale development and evaluation throughout the different stages of the project. In doing so, we aim to provide an example for the application of mixed methods approaches within a research project, as well as highlight the specific benefits and insights for value research.

Donnerstag, 12. April 2018, 17.30 Uhr
Institut für Soziologie, Seminarraum 3