



## Design and Evaluation of Religiosity Measurement Model with Indigenous Approach; with An Emphasis on the Epistemic Dimension

Mohammad Yaribeygi Darvishvand<sup>1</sup>  Mohammad Seyyedghorab<sup>2</sup>  Mahdi Vahidi Asl<sup>3</sup> 

1. MA of Strategic management of culture, Faculty of Social and cultural sciences, Imam Hossein University, Tehran, Iran. (Corresponding Author) Email: [Yaribeygi733@gmail.com](mailto:Yaribeygi733@gmail.com)

2. MA of Sociology, Faculty of social Sciences, Allameh Tabataba'i University, Tehran, Iran. Email: [seyed466@yahoo.com](mailto:seyed466@yahoo.com)

3. MA of Philosophy of social sciences, Faculty of social Sciences, Tehran University, Tehran, Iran. Email:

[M.vahidi1412@gmail.com](mailto:M.vahidi1412@gmail.com)

### Article Info

**Article type:**  
Research Article

### Article history:

Received: 30 October 2023

Received in revised form: 13  
December 2023

Accepted: 19 December 2023

Published online: 20 March  
2024

**Keywords:** *Dimensions of religiosity, Epistemic religiosity, Indicator of religiosity, Measure of Religiosity, Scale of religiosity.*

### ABSTRACT

Attention to research in the field of religious studies has not only a declining trend, but we can see the quantitative and qualitative growth of this researches, especially the research about the types, amount and changes of religiosity in recent decades. Among these, one of the most fundamental challenges in the field of religious studies is the design of indigenous indicators that are appropriate to the cultural, historical and social contexts. Although in Iran, in the last two decades, valuable efforts have been made in this field; But still, the designed indicators have not been able to gain general acceptance and usage. On the other hand, religion and consequently religiosity can be classified and studied in three cognitive - epistemic, emotional or behavioral dimensions. In the studies that have presented the scale about religiosity, the effort to present the scale in all three dimensions has reduced the accuracy and detailed discussion in each of these mentioned dimensions. Therefore, the need to pay more detail about each of these dimensions in the topics related to religiosity is felt. so, the aim of this article is to provide Indigenous indicators with an emphasis on the epistemic dimension of religiosity. In this research, first through theoretical studies, 81 indicators were calculated to measure religiosity and were evaluated during 20 exploratory interviews. Then, 23 components under 6 more frequent and more important axes were identified, which can be used as an indicator to measure epistemic religiosity in different statistical societies. These components are: "attitude towards religion", "expectation from religion", "epistemic foundations", "anthropological foundations", "meaning and purpose of life", "man's understanding of ethical foundations".

**Cite this article:** Yaribeygi, M., Seyyedghorab, M., Vahidi asl, M. (2024). Design and evaluation of religiosity measurement model with indigenous approach; with an emphasis on the epistemic dimension. *Journal of Social Theories of Muslim Thinkers*, 14(1): 38-65.

<https://doi.org/10.22059/jstmt.2023.367128.1664>



© The Author(s).

Publisher: University of Tehran Press.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.22059/jstmt.2023.367128.1664>

### **1. Introduction**

In known societies until today, a society cannot be called irreligious (Durkheim, 2004: 329). the authority of religious culture in Iran during several centuries adds to the importance of studies about religion and the phenomena attributed to it. The unique characteristics of religions and the fit of the indicators designed with the historical and social contexts of the West have made it impossible to use the existing studies in this field with full confidence to measure the types and amount of religiosity in Iran. In a general definition, religion means a way of life, which comes from the desire for success and the type of interpretation of existence and human (Tabataba'i, 2011: 8). Also, In a specific definition, it is considered as a related and coherent set of teachings that has assumed a separate unity and totality in the three general areas of beliefs, ethics and rulings (Motahhari, 2005; Misbah Yazdi, 1986). Also, religion is for humans and is appropriate to his aspects and dimensions. According to researches, three dimensions can be considered for humans, which are: cognitive/ epistemic, emotional and behavioral dimensions. The efforts to present the scale in all three dimensions has reduced the accuracy and detailed discussion in each of these mentioned dimensions. Therefore, the need to pay more detail about each of these dimensions in the topics related to religiosity is felt. so, the aim of this article is to provide indigenous model and indicators with an emphasis on the epistemic dimension of religiosity. Corresponding to these dimensions, religiosity can also be defined as attention or commitment to these teachings in three fields of cognitive/ epistemic, emotional and behavioral.

The main research questions are:

What are the indicators and model of measuring epistemic religiosity with a native approach?

What are the indicators and model of measuring religiosity in domestic and foreign sources?

### **2. Background**

Among the Persian researches that are the background of this article, these studies were examined: Shojaezand's research (2005), Taleban (2009), Mohseni Tabrizi & Karamollahi (2009), Ebrahimi & Bahrami ehsan (2012), Mahboobi (2015). And also the research of Khodayarifard et al (2021). In Non-persian researches, the studies of Allport (1966; 1950), Hill and Hood (1999), Underwood and Teresi (2002), Lenski (1961) and Glock and Stark (1965) were used. But as mentioned, the designed indicators have not been able to gain general acceptance and application. the effort to present the scale in all dimensions has reduced the accuracy and detailed discussion in each of these mentioned dimensions. Also, Some of these indicators do not fit our cultural and social backgrounds.

### **3. Methodology**

This research uses the Grounded theory and its sample is among students. First, the theoretical literature in this field was reviewed and 81 initial indicators were obtained. Then, by interviewing the students, their positions regarding these indicators were evaluated. This research formally follows the same coding principles of the Grounded theory method in classifying and ordering the data; But in terms of the content of the collected data, the phenomenological narrative research technique has been used for analysis. Then, using the axial coding of the results obtained from the first twenty interviews, a conceptual framework consisting of 23 Indicator was set up in the form of six main axes. Finally, in order to measure the selected indicators during another 30 interviews, each of the above 6 axes was evaluated again along with related indicators, which resulted in the presentation of different types of religiosity in the epistemic dimension.

#### 4. Findings

In the findings section of the article, we try to provide a general picture of the desired indicators, and then briefly depict its place in the works of thinkers, and further define its boundary with similar concepts by brief explanations. In the "attitude towards religion" axis, there are indicators of "the role and perception of God in life", "the relationship between religion and life", "the origin of religion", "the place of Ahl al-Bayt in religion" and "the place of the clergy in religion". The selected indicators under the "expectation from religion" axis are: "the relationship between spirituality and religion", "the domain of religion", "religion and politics" and "religion and emerging issues". Under the axis of "epistemic foundations" are indicators of "possibility of plurality of religious propositions", "possibility of knowing reality", "realm of reason", "relationship between science and religion", "relationship between reason and revelation" and "resources of knowledge of religion". The most important indicator under the axis of "anthropological foundations" is "the realm of human freedom in religion" and "the basis of women's rights in religion". "Resurrection (afterlife) belief", "the effect of belief in death on humans" and "the relationship between the purpose of life and Attitude to the other world" are also indicators of "teleological foundations". "Basics of ethics and values" as the last axis, includes indicators of "relationship between ethics and religion", "responsibility for actions" and "relationship between motivation and action".

#### 5. Conclusion

This research tried to provide a model and an indicator suitable to the indigenous cultural and social contexts by focusing on the epistemological dimension and using the grounded theory method. After reviewing the previous literature and theoretical studies, 81 indicators were extracted, which are placed under the three dimensions of cognitive/epistemological / epistemic, emotional or behavioral. The number of 56 indicators was related to the cognitive dimension, which was categorized into 8 axes. Then, through interviews, the frequency indicators were selected based on high sensitivity and greater discriminating power, which included 23 indicators in the form of six main axes. According to the findings and by using these indicators, different types of religiosity can be recognized and distinguished among students. Finally, through another 30 interviews, each of the above mentioned six axes along with related indicators were used as a measurement tool. The result was the presentation of 21 types of religiosity in the epistemological dimension among students, and in this way, the effectiveness of these axes and related indicators proof of receipt.

**Funding:** This research received no external funding.

**Ethical Considerations:** Complied with.

**Data Availability Statement:** Not applicable.

**Informed Consent Statement:** Not applicable.

**Conflicts of Interest:** The authors declare no conflict of interest.

#### References

- Allport, G (1950). *The individual and His religion*. New York: Mac Millan
- Allport, G (1966). The religious context of prejudice. *journal for the scientific study of religion*. 5. 432-443
- Durkheim, Emile (2004). *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life*. Translated by Baqir Parham. Tehran: nashr-e-markaz [in Persian]
- Ebrahimi, Abolfazl; Bahrami ehsan, Hadi (2012). The relationship between eschatology and health in students of Tehran University and religious studies students of Qom seminary. *Ravanshenasi & Din*. 4 (2). 45-62 [in Persian]
- Glock, C; Stark, R (1965). *Religion and Society in Tension*. Chicago: Rand McNally

- Hill, P.C. and Hood Jr., R.W (1999). *Measures of Religiosity*. Birmingham: Religious Education Press
- Khodayarifard, Mohammad et al (2021). *Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of religiosity measurement including religiosity scales*. Tehran: Tehran University Press [in Persian]
- Lenski, Gerhard (1961). *The Religious Factor, A Sociological Study of Religion's Impact on Politics, Economics, and Family Life*. New York (Garden City) , Doubleday and Company, Inc
- Mahboobi, Reza (2015). Building a (indigenous) scale to measure religiosity. *Management at Islamic University*. 4 (1). 117-134 [in Persian]
- Misbah Yazdi, Muhammad Taqi (1986). *Theological Instructions*. Tehran: Islamic Development Organization press [in Persian]
- Mohseni Tabrizi, Alireza; Karamollahi, Nematolah (2009). Examining the state of students' commitment to dimensions and signs of religiosity. *Sociological researches*. 3 (2). 7-34 [in Persian]
- Motahhari, Morteza (2005). *The collection of Shahid Motahari's works*. Tehran: Sadra [in Persian]
- Shojaeezand, Alireza (2005). A model for measuring religiosity in Iran. *Iranian Journal of Sociology*. 6 (1). 34-66 [in Persian]
- Tabataba'i, Muhammad Husayn (2011). *Al Mizan: An Exegesis of the Qur'an*. Beirut: Al-Alami Press Foundation [in Arabic]
- Taleban, Mohammad Reza (2009). A Conceptual Framework for Religiosity Survey in Iran. *Islam and Social Sciences*. 1 (2). 7-48 [in Persian]
- Underwood, Lynn G., & Teresi, Jeanne A (2002). The daily spiritual experience scale: development, theoretical description, reliability, exploratory factor analysis, and preliminary construct validity using health-related data. *Annals of Behavioral Medicine*. 24(1), 22-33.