

MEASUREMENT OF SPECIESIST ATTITUDES

IVO WINDRICH
IVO.WINDRICH@UNI-LEIPZIG.DE

UNIVERSITÄT LEIPZIG

Fakultät für Sozialwissenschaften und Philosophie
Institut für Soziologie

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Question 1: How can we specify the concept of speciesism so that it is suitable for a sociological theorizing?

Question 2: How can we measure speciesist attitudes in a reliable and valid manner?

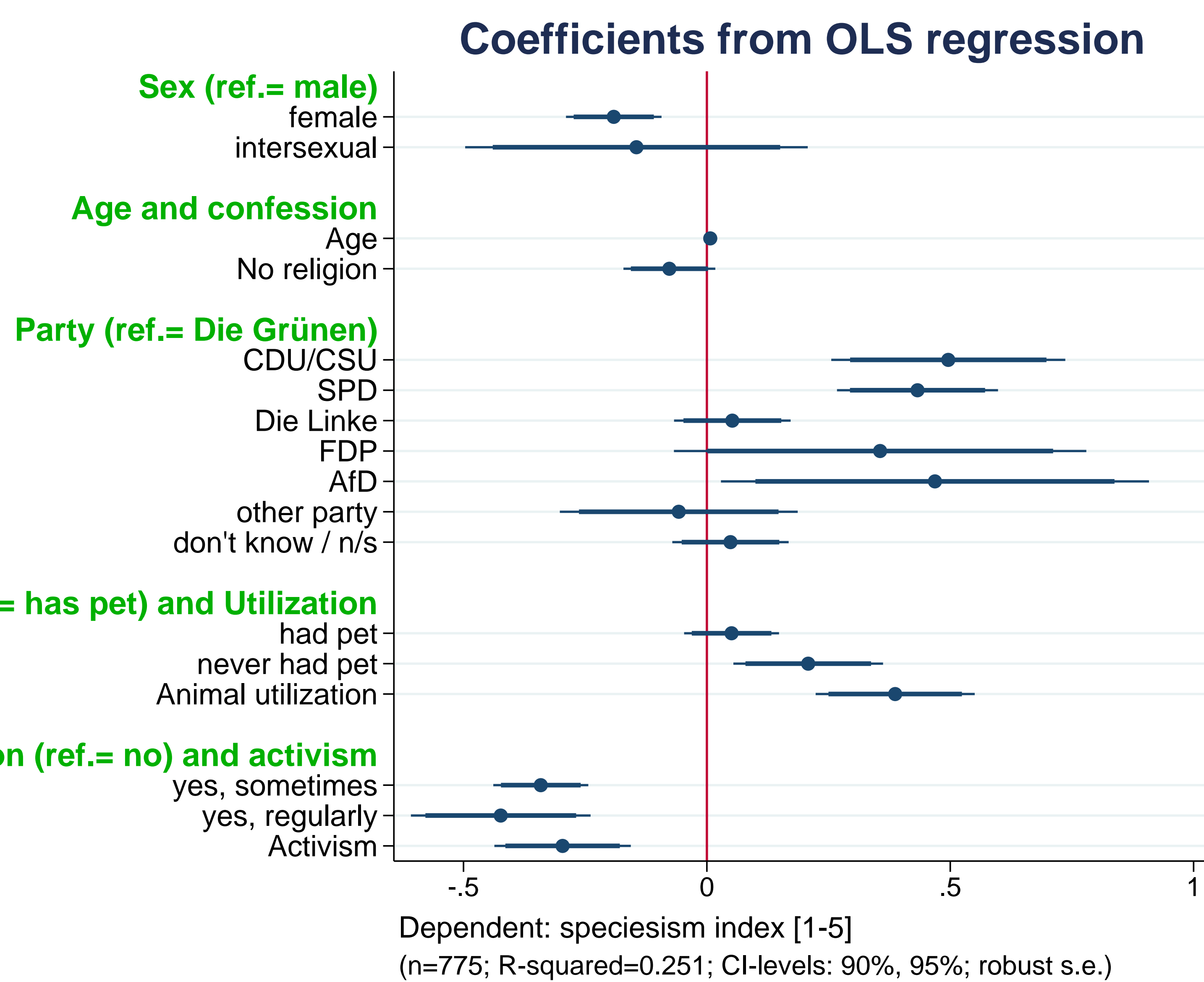
Question 3: What are determinants of speciesist attitudes?

THE TERM SPECIESISM

Based on the literature of the German animal rights movement I [1, 2] defined speciesist attitudes as characterised by

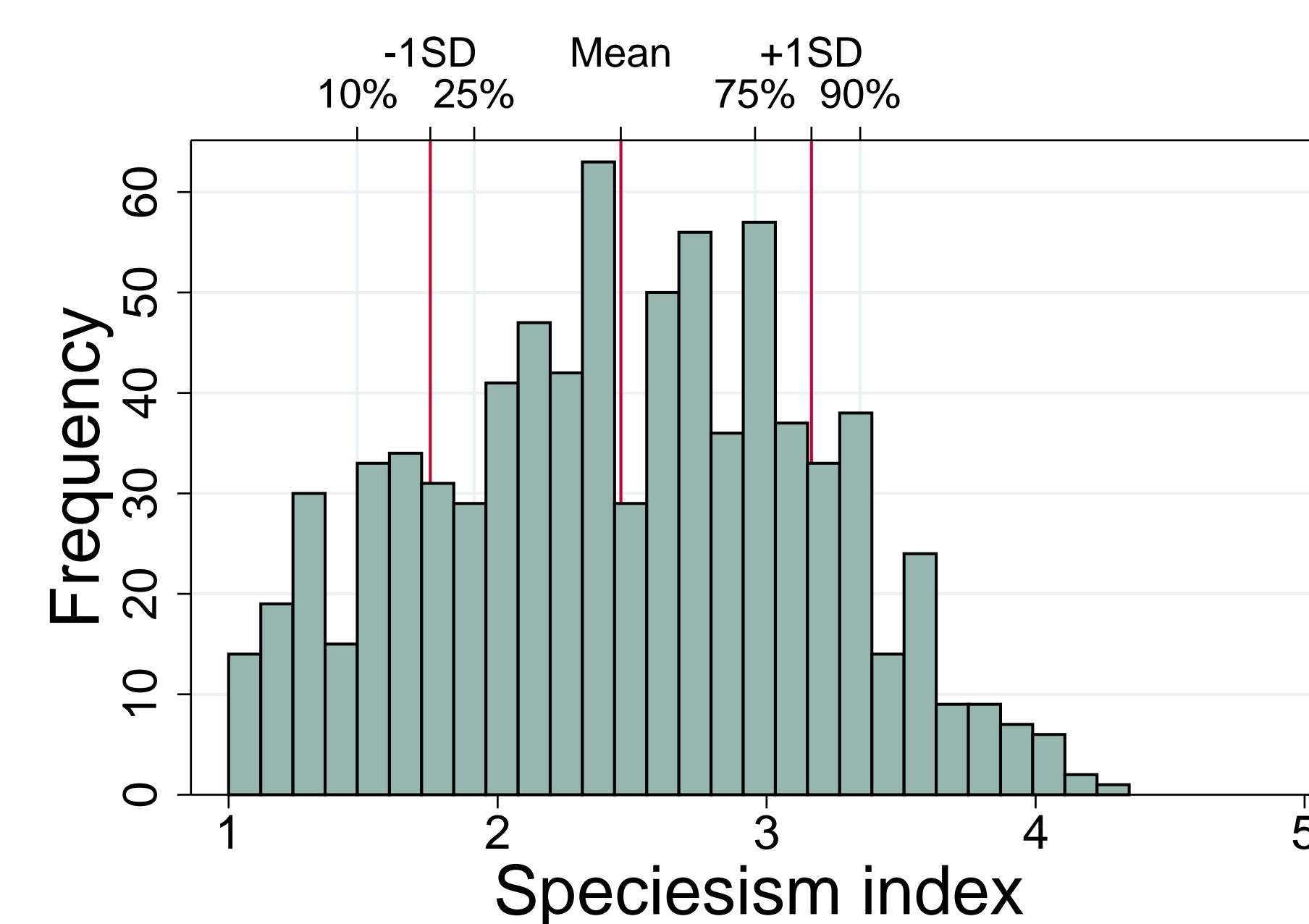
1. (**Otherness**) perception or emphasizing of differences between humans and animals,
2. (**Inferiority**) devaluation of animals and a human chauvinism,
3. (**Objectification**) life and body of animals is declared as purpose for human interests,
4. (**Legitimization of violence**) denying, relativization or legitimization of violence against animals (e.g. the violence in animal testing or slaughtering),
5. (**Low empathy**) an emotional distance or low empathy towards animals.

CONSTRUCT VALIDITY



- Women are less speciesist than men.
- Age shows a very small positive effect.
- Preferences for Green or Left Party correlate with less speciesist attitudes.
- No effects from educational attainment or occupational status (not shown).
- People who work in a branch where animals are utilized or killed are significantly more speciesist.
- People who own pets are less speciesist.
- The less speciesist a person is the more she tends to donate for animals or is engaged in activism for animals.
- There is a correlation of medium strength ($\rho = -0.659$) between speciesist attitudes and eating habits: the less speciesist a person is the more she tends to a vegan diet (see also [2]).

INDEX DISTRIBUTION



- Speciesism index as mean of the 23 Likert-items
- The index is symmetrically distributed.
- mean = 2.458 / median = 2.478
- 1. quartile = 1.913 / 3. quartile = 2.957
- sd = 0.708; has a suitable dispersion

Interpretation:

- values $\leq 2 \Leftrightarrow$ not speciesist or tendentially not speciesist
- $2 < \text{values} \leq 3 \Leftrightarrow$ ambivalent
- $3 < \text{values} \Leftrightarrow$ speciesist
- $4 < \text{values} \Leftrightarrow$ strongly speciesist

RELIABILITY

- High internal consistency: Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.925$
- Similar means of the index and similar effects in the four subsamples.

FACTORIAL VALIDITY

Correlation matrix from a structural equation model

	Other.	Infer.	Object.	Viol.
Inferior.	0.727			
Objectif.	0.554	0.839		
Violence	0.433	0.696	0.907	
Empathy	0.486	0.717	0.740	0.729

REFERENCES

- [1] Windrich, Ivo 2017a: *Konstruktion eines Messinstruments zur Erhebung speziesistischer Einstellungen*. Masterarbeit, Soziologie, Universität Leipzig.
- [2] Windrich, Ivo 2017b: *Zur Messung speziesistischer Einstellungen*. *Arbeitsberichte des Instituts für Soziologie* 72, Leipzig.

SAMPLING / METHODS

Methods of sampling

- Face-to-face-interview in the inner-city of Leipzig ($n = 49$)
- Snowball sampling ($n = 62$)
- with explicit sampling of vegans
- First semester students (mostly) of sociology ($n = 195$)
- Online-questionary with SoSci Survey ($n = 500$)
- self-selection of persons who are interested in animal welfare
- Respondents in total: $n = 806$

Operationalization

- Measurement with 23 items
- Likert-scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree)
- Operationalization of the 5 defined dimensions of speciesist attitudes

Sample

- 65.4% female; 33.4% male
- Age in range [14, 85], mean=28.6, sd=11
- 60.5% students
- Preferences for the Left or Green Party
- 15.5% vegetarians + 12.7% vegans

Question example

The pain of a human counts more than the pain of a mouse.

- Don't agree at all
 Slightly disagree
 Undecided
 Slightly agree
 Absolutely agree