



Cultural differences regarding expected utilities and costs of plagiarism –

A comparison of high-trust- and low-trust-student-samples

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Contents

1. Theory
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Plagiarism

- analyzed from a criminological or „cheating“-perspective
- Plagiarism as a variation of „crime“
 - „crime as the usage of force or fraud [in social relations] for the pursuit of self-interest“ (Gottfredson/Hirschi 1989)
 - Plagiarism as some kind of fraudulent activity undertaken for the pursuit of self-interest, i.e. to realize chosen ends or to solve assigned tasks

Plagiarism

- is a crime not of passion, but of calculation
- is a crime, where actors willingness to commit in a given situation varies with ...
 - the estimated utility of anticipated consequences for the ***case of successful plagiarism*** and
 - the estimated costs of anticipated consequences for the ***case of detected plagiarism***



Imagined case of successful plagiarism

Anticipated consequences

Good Grade

Transaction gains of plagiarism

Bad Conscience (negative Utility)

Expected Utilities

Administrative sanctions

Fellow students sanctions

Teachers sanctions

Embarrassment

Expected Costs

Imagined case of detected plagiarism

Overarching Question:

Which role do play

cultural influences

regarding students' expected utilities

and costs of plagiarism?

Generalized Trust

- ... as an expectation that arises within a community of regular, honest, and cooperative behavior, based on commonly shared norms, on the part of other members of that community
(vgl. Fukuyama 1995, p. 26)
- ... as an element of the cultural structure of a society being relevant for the behavioral orientations and the behavioral choices of actors
- “... [as] a cultural element defining the whole society”
(Fukuyama 1995, p. 4f.)
 - High-Trust- and Low-Trust-societies

Research Questions

1. Do student populations with **varying levels of generalized trust** differ regarding their **average willingness to plagiarize**?
2. Do student populations with **varying levels of generalized trust** differ with respect to **perceived utilities and costs of plagiarism**?

Study Design

- Standardized-written survey with students from German, Polish and Danish universities
- Questionnaire has been developed in English language, afterwards translated in native language of surveyed students
- for purposes of re-validation questionnaire has been retranslated in a final step by third persons to English

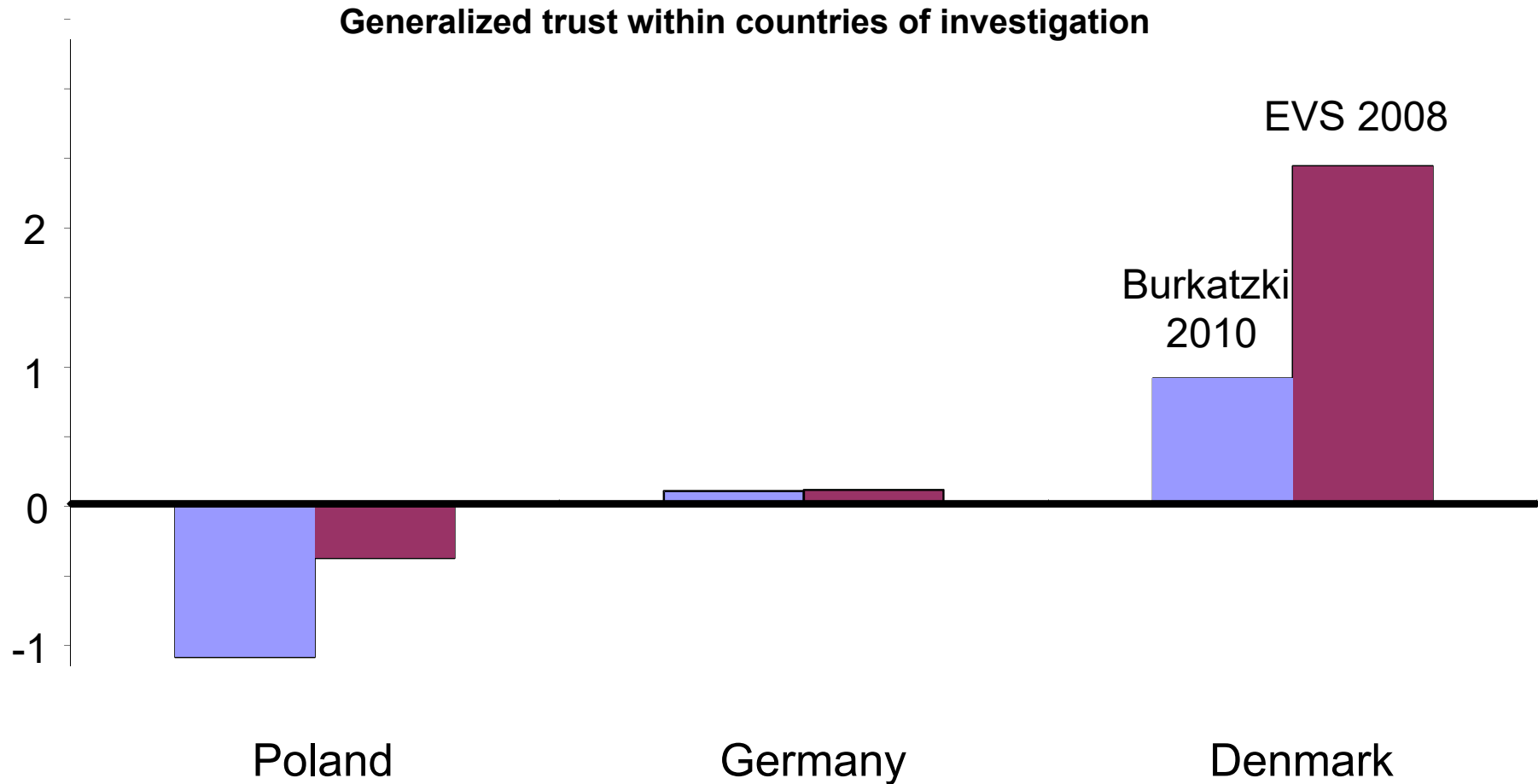
Sample, Data

- Students from 3rd semester onwards; economic and social scientific study programs
- Nordhausen (GER), Wroclaw, Opole (PL), Odense (DK)
- n (total) = 1115
- = Sampling procedure does **not** follow a representative sampling program with view to country-specific student populations
- = Re-weighting of Polish and Danish data
 - reference: size and sociodemographic structure (gender; academic term; mode of studying) of the German sample

Methods of Data analyses

- ANOVA
- Principle Component Analyses (PCA)
- Regression-based methods

Why Poland, Germany and Denmark?



Data: Studying and Ethics 2010; European Value Study 2008 (z-standardized survey data; country specific mean values)
Source: Own computations

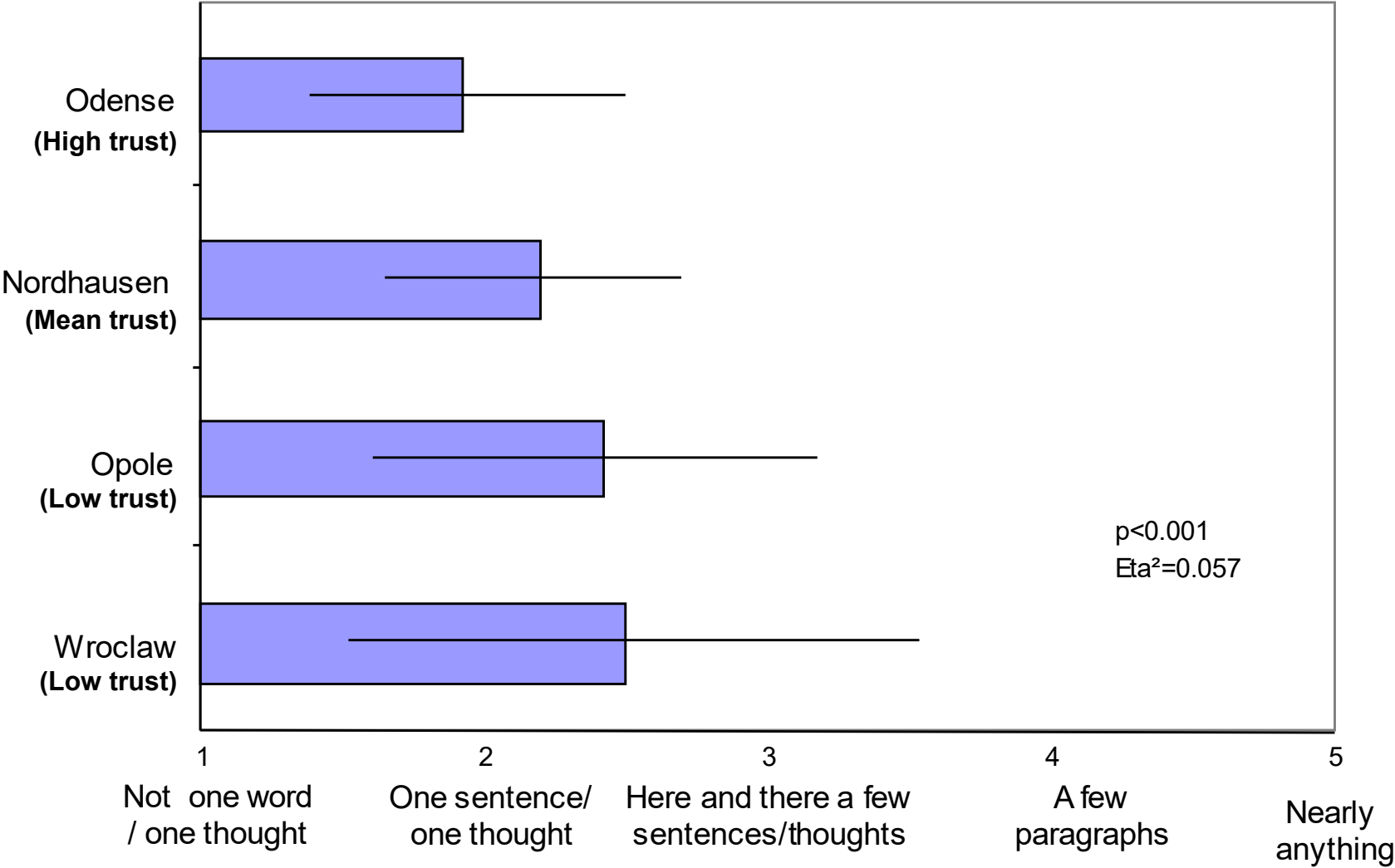
- Denmark = High Trust Sample
- Germany = Medium Trust Sample
- Poland = Low Trust Sample

Research Question 1

Do student populations with **varying levels of generalized trust** differ regarding their **average willingness to plagiarize?**

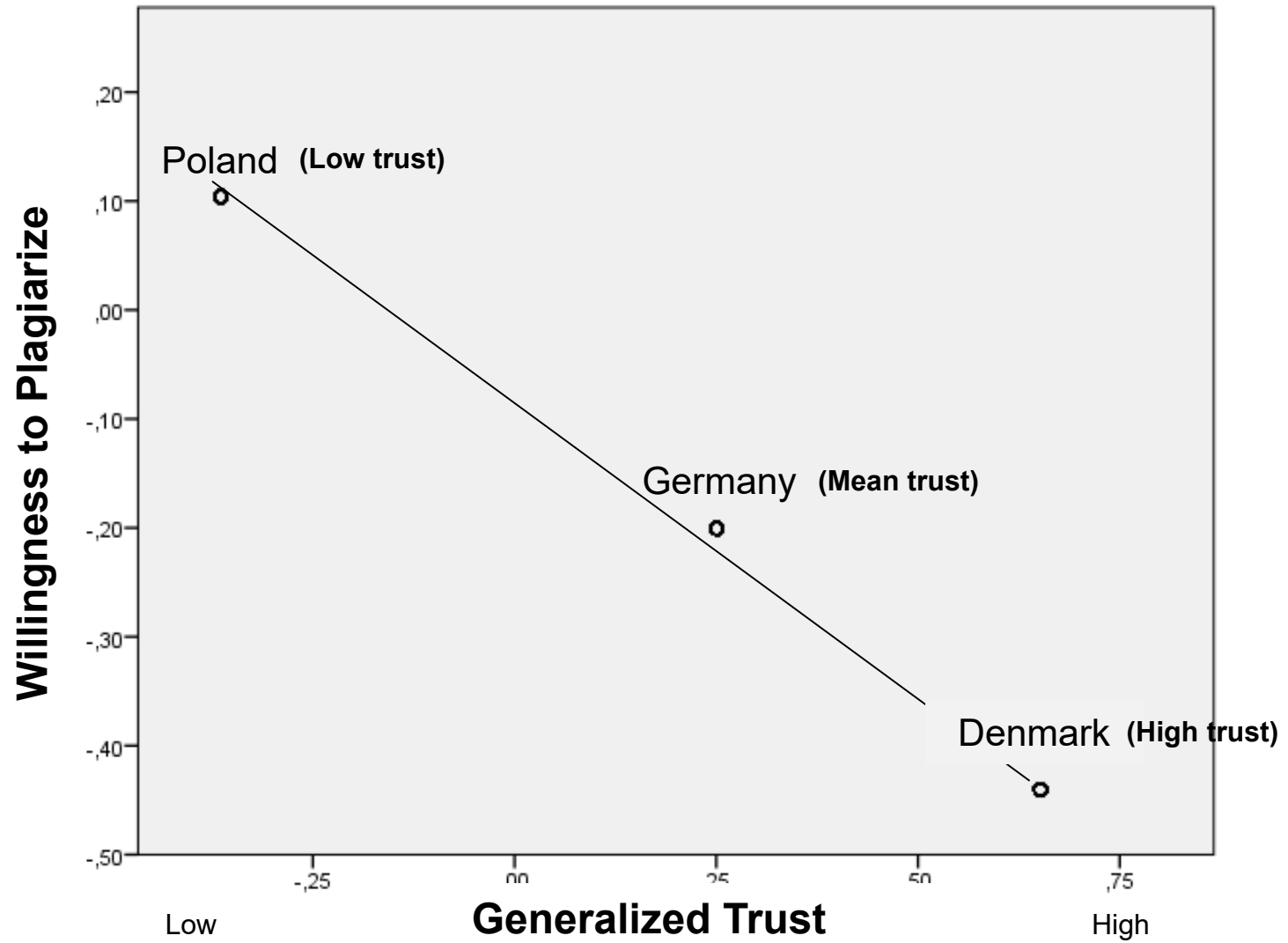
Survey Question

How much thoughts and citations would you be maximally willing to adopt in a seminar paper without indicating its' origins?



Data: Studying and Ethics, 2010
 Source: Own computations

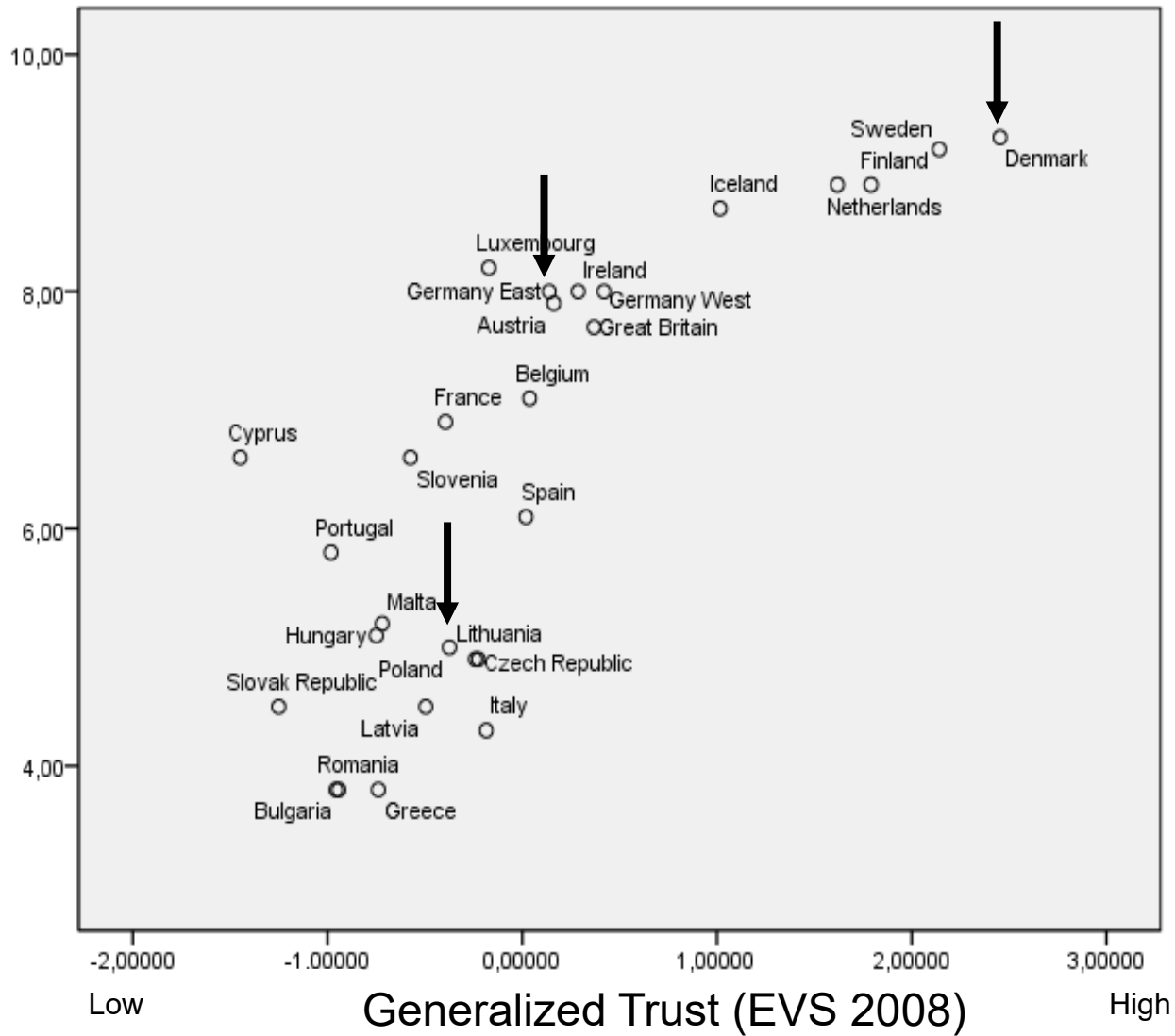
Low



High

Low
Corruption

TI Corruption Perception Index 2009



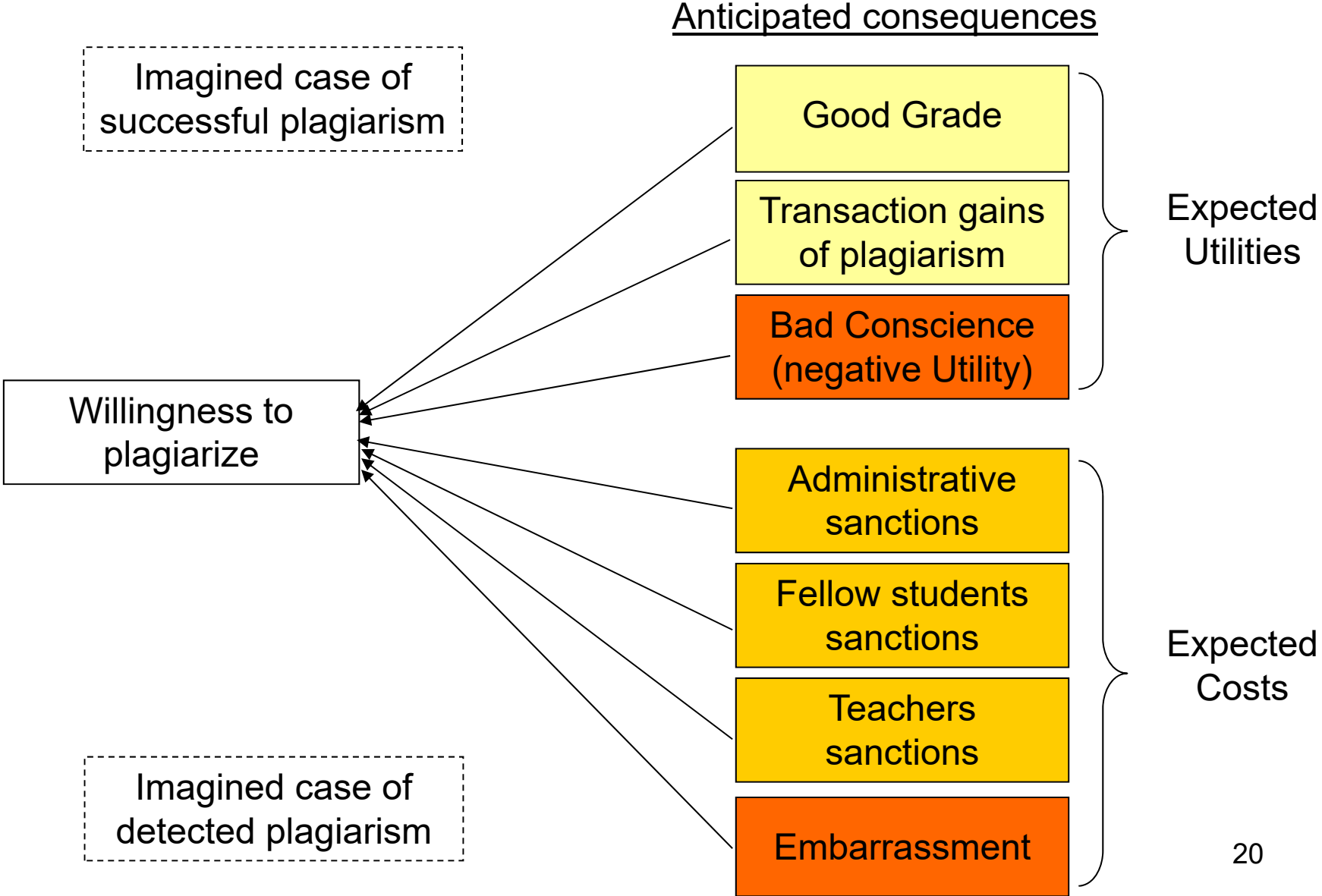
High
Corruption

Data: European Value Study 2008 (z-standardized data; country specific mean values), CPI 2009
Source: Own computations

Research Question 2

Do students from populations with varying levels of generalized trust differ with respect to perceived utilities and costs of plagiarism?

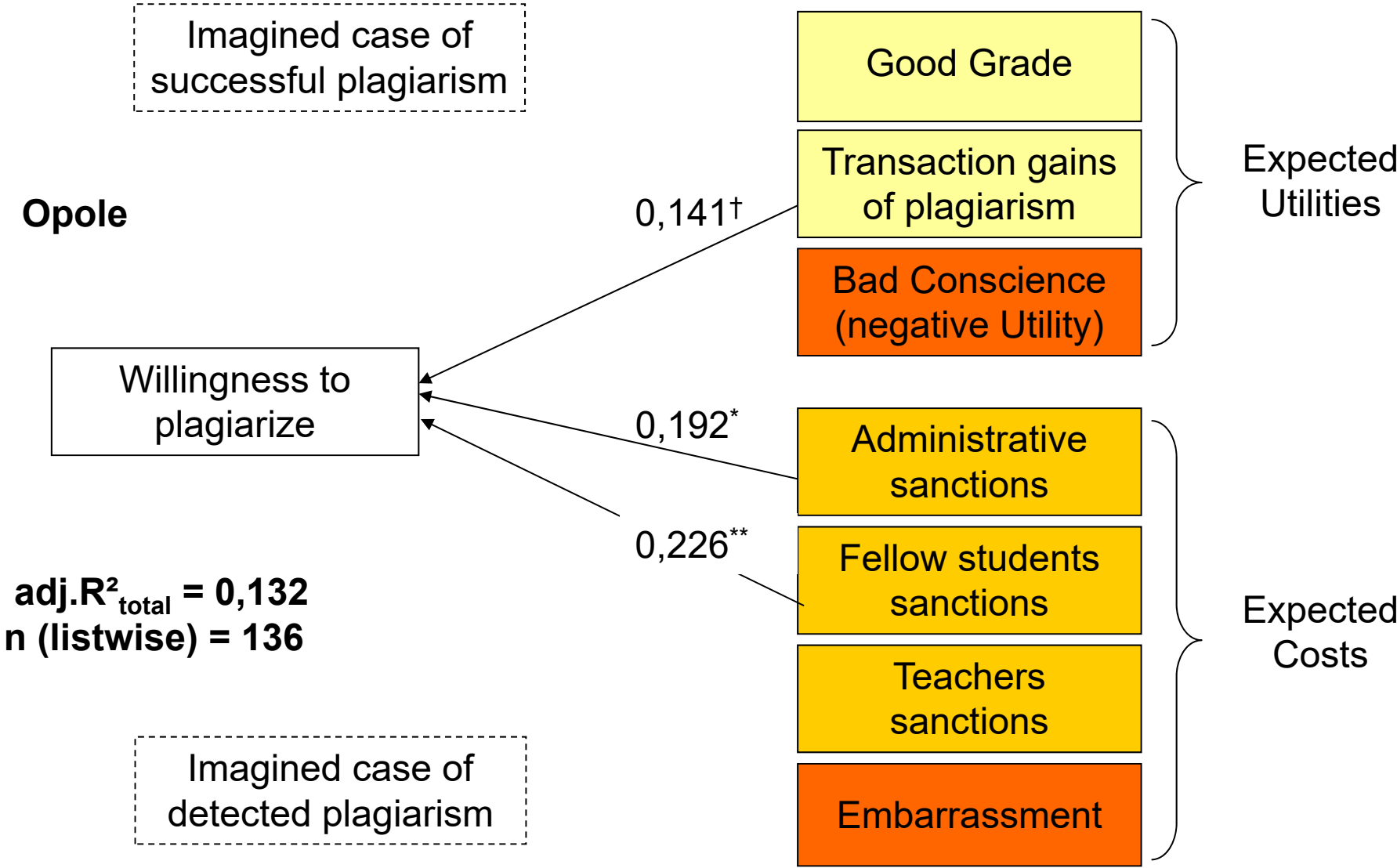
Main effect models for each sample



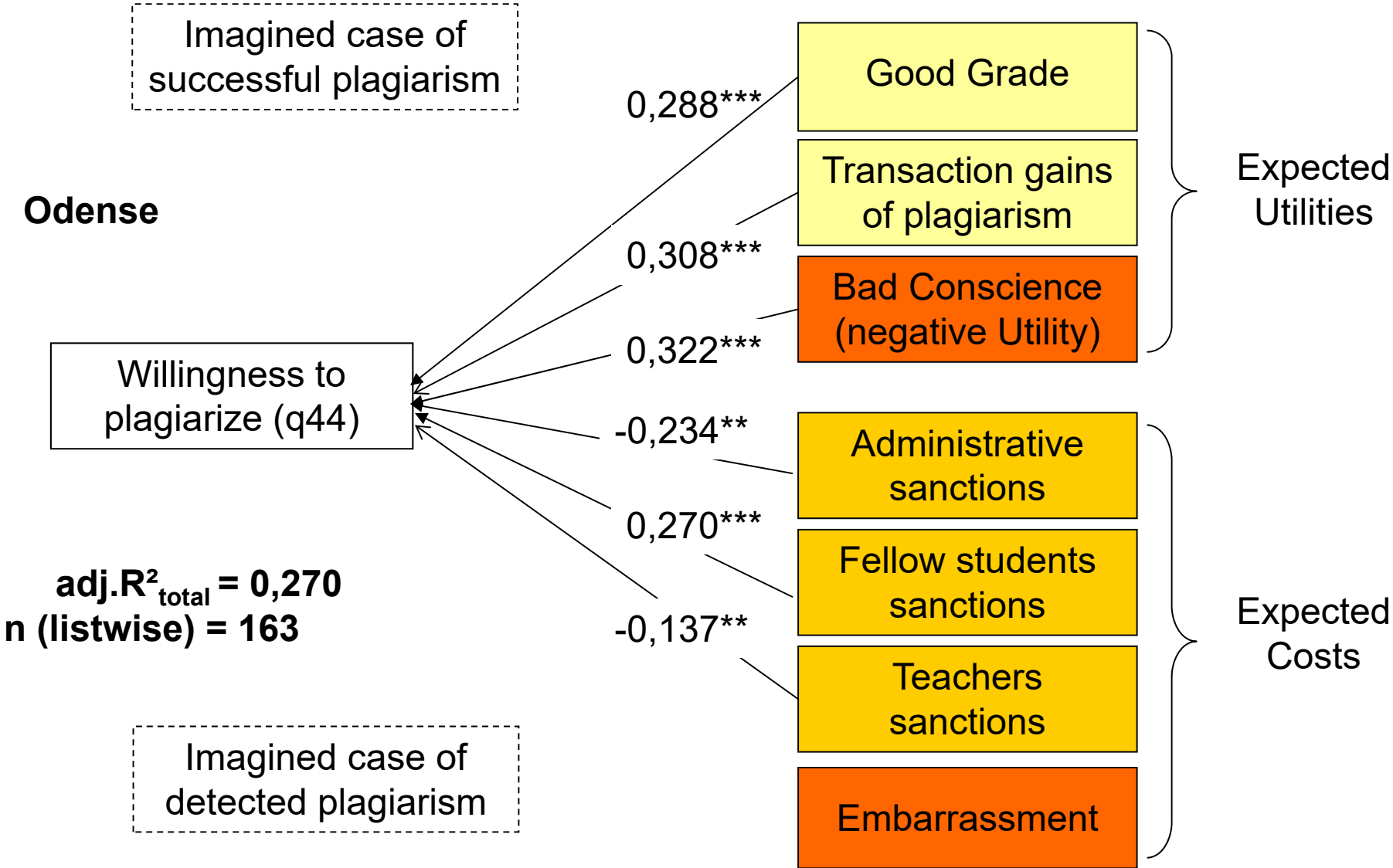
Analytical Focus

Differential influence
of expected utilities and costs of plagiarism
on willingness to plagiarize
within high-trust and low-trust student samples?

Low-trust-sample (LinReg: Standardized Coefficients)



High-trust-sample (LinReg: Standardized Coefficients)



How to explain the negative effect of admin sanctions on plagiarism in a high-trust student-sample?

- Organizational Psychology:
Theory of implicit psychological contracts (David Litzky [2006, AMP])
- Observation: employees who are strongly intrinsically motivated to show productive work behavior become demotivated and reactant when being threatend by a system of negative sanctions that tries to enforce productivity
 - violation of an implicit **psychological contract of reciprocal appreciation**
- Our data suggest that psychological contracts of reciprocal appreciation are especially valid in high-trust-environments

Summary

1. Significant differences regarding the willingness to plagiarize between high-trust- and low-trust-student-samples.
 - willingness to plagiarize increases with a decrease of generalized trust
2. Cost-utility-reflections in each sample do have significant main effects on the individual willingness to plagiarize
3. The effect expected utilities and costs do have on the willingness to plagiarize varies between high-trust and low-trust samples
 - effect of moral self-commitment (bad conscience) on the willingness to plagiarize within high-trust-samples is much greater in size than the effect of any penalty for plagiarism.
 - Reverse effect of administrative sanctions on willingness-to-plagiarize within high-trust- and low-trust-student-samples.

Conclusion

- Strategies of plagiarism prevention should be brought into agreement with the trust environment students are living in
- Strengthening of trust cultures – and mediated thereby likewise the capitalization of students' moral self-commitment – seems to be a more effective mechanism in preventing plagiarism than a sanction policy intending in the first place deterrence by threat of punishment

Thank you!

Problem	Theory	Research questions	Method & Data	Findings	Conclusion
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Literatur

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Problem	Theory	Research questions	Method & Data	Findings	Conclusion
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Literatur

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Appendix

Measure of generalized trust

- Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people?
 - A. Most people can be trusted (1)
 - B. Don't know (0)
 - C. Need to be very careful (-1)

Operationalisation: Utility

2.		Please imagine you would adopt external thoughts or citations without indicating its origins in a seminar paper you submitted as your own work to a professor and this adoption has <i>not</i> been detected:									
		(1) Considered separately, how comfortable would the following possible consequences of your deed be?					(2) How high would be the probability to you that the named consequence does occur?				
		Very comfortable	Rather comfortable	Never mind	Rather uncomfortable	Very uncomfortable					
							Very probable	Rather probable	Rather improbable	Very improbable	
Good Grade		<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	(a) A very good note for your paper	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
		<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	(b) Appreciation for a successful achievement	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Trans-action Gains		<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	(c) Low temporal costs for preparing the paper	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
		<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	(d) Low mental effort for preparing the paper	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
Bad Conscience		<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	(f) To have a bad conscience	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
		<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	(g) To feel that you have done something embarrassing	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
		<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	(f) To feel that you have been dishonest to others	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
		<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	(g) To have overall an uneasy feeling	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4
		<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	(h) To feel that you have not abided the law	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4

Operationalisierung: Kosten

	Very comfortable	Rather comfortable	Neither	Rather uncomfortable	Very uncomfortable		Very probable	Rather probable	Rather improbable	Very improbable
Embarrassment	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(a) To be ashamed	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(b) To have a bad conscience	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(c) To feel that you have done something embarrassing	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(d) To feel that you have violated someones copyrights	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(e) To have overall an uneasy feeling	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
Teachers Sanctions	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(f) To lose the trust of your academic teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(g) To remain in bad memory of your academic teachers	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(h) To experience discrimination during lectures of the academic teacher being affected	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(i) Cutback of helpfulness and cooperativeness on side of your academic teacher	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
Fellows Sanctions	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(j) Depreciative looks of fellow students	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(k) Snide remarks from your fellow students	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(l) Accusations that you are lazy	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
Adminis Sanction	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(m) To fail the exam in the subject of matter	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)
	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(n) Removal from the register of students	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)

Net-Utility of Consequences

	Very comfortable	Rather comfortable	Never mind	Rather uncomfortable	Very uncomfortable		Very probable	Rather probable	Rather improbable	Very improbable
Emt	<input type="checkbox"/> (-2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (-1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (0)	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	(a) To be ashamed	<input type="checkbox"/> (1)	<input type="checkbox"/> (2)	<input type="checkbox"/> (3)	<input type="checkbox"/> (4)

1. Utility: subjective value * subjective probability for each consequence
2. Add-up the individual utility values for all consequences of one type
3. Division of the computed sum by the number of items that have been assigned to one type of consequence

Rotated Component Matrix

	Komponente						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
q42_06_iakt To feel that you have been dishonest to others	,819						
q42_05_iakt To feel that you have done something embarrassing	,804						
q42_04_iakt To have a bad conscience	,801						
q42_07_iakt To have overall an uneasy feeling	,786						
q42_08_iakt To feel that you have not abided the law	,783						
q41_03_iakt To feel you have done something embarrassing		,820					
q41_01_iakt To be ashamed		,765					
q41_02_iakt To have a bad conscience		,761					
q41_05_iakt To have overall an uneasy feeling		,752					
q41_11_iakt Snide remarks from your fellow students			,853				
q41_10_iakt Depreciative looks of fellow students			,814				
q41_12_iakt Accusations that you are lazy			,779				
q42_02_iakt Appreciation for a successful achievement				,849			
q42_01_iakt very good grade for your paper				,828			
q41_15_iakt Removal from register of students					,873		
q41_14_iakt To fail the exam in the subject of matter					,795		
q42_10_iakt Low temporal costs for preparing the paper						,871	
q42_09_iakt Low mental effort for preparing the paper	,406					,785	
q41_08_iakt ITo experience discrimination during lectures of the academic teacher							,857
q41_09_iakt Cutback of helpfulness and cooperativeness on side of your academic teacher							,749

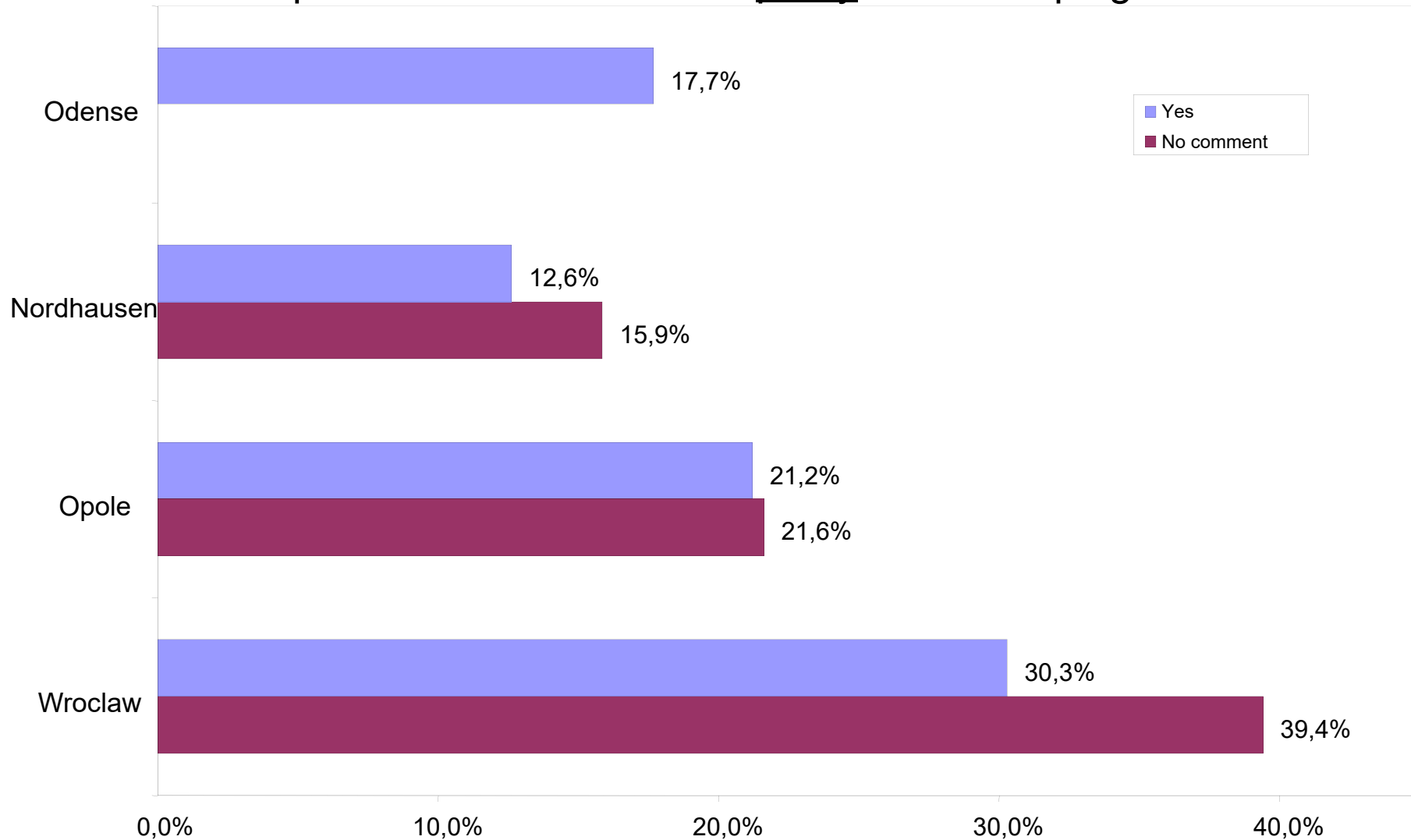
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
 Rotation converged in 7 iterations.

Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8,504	42,520	42,520	8,504	42,520	42,520	3,960	19,802	19,802
2	2,905	14,524	57,045	2,905	14,524	57,045	3,072	15,358	35,160
3	1,272	6,362	63,407	1,272	6,362	63,407	2,509	12,543	47,703
4	1,114	5,572	68,978	1,114	5,572	68,978	1,785	8,923	56,626
5	1,027	5,135	74,113	1,027	5,135	74,113	1,716	8,581	65,206
6	,758	3,789	77,902	,758	3,789	77,902	1,668	8,342	73,549
7	,731	3,654	81,556	,731	3,654	81,556	1,601	8,007	81,556
8	,444	2,222	83,777						
9	,408	2,042	85,819						
10	,396	1,980	87,799						
11	,353	1,767	89,566						
12	,310	1,549	91,115						
13	,300	1,500	92,615						
14	,281	1,403	94,019						
15	,240	1,198	95,216						
16	,230	1,148	96,365						
17	,200	1,001	97,366						
18	,190	,951	98,317						
19	,178	,890	99,207						
20	,159	,793	100,000						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Did you already submit a seminar or final paper as your own to a professor or lecturer that partly had been plagiarized?

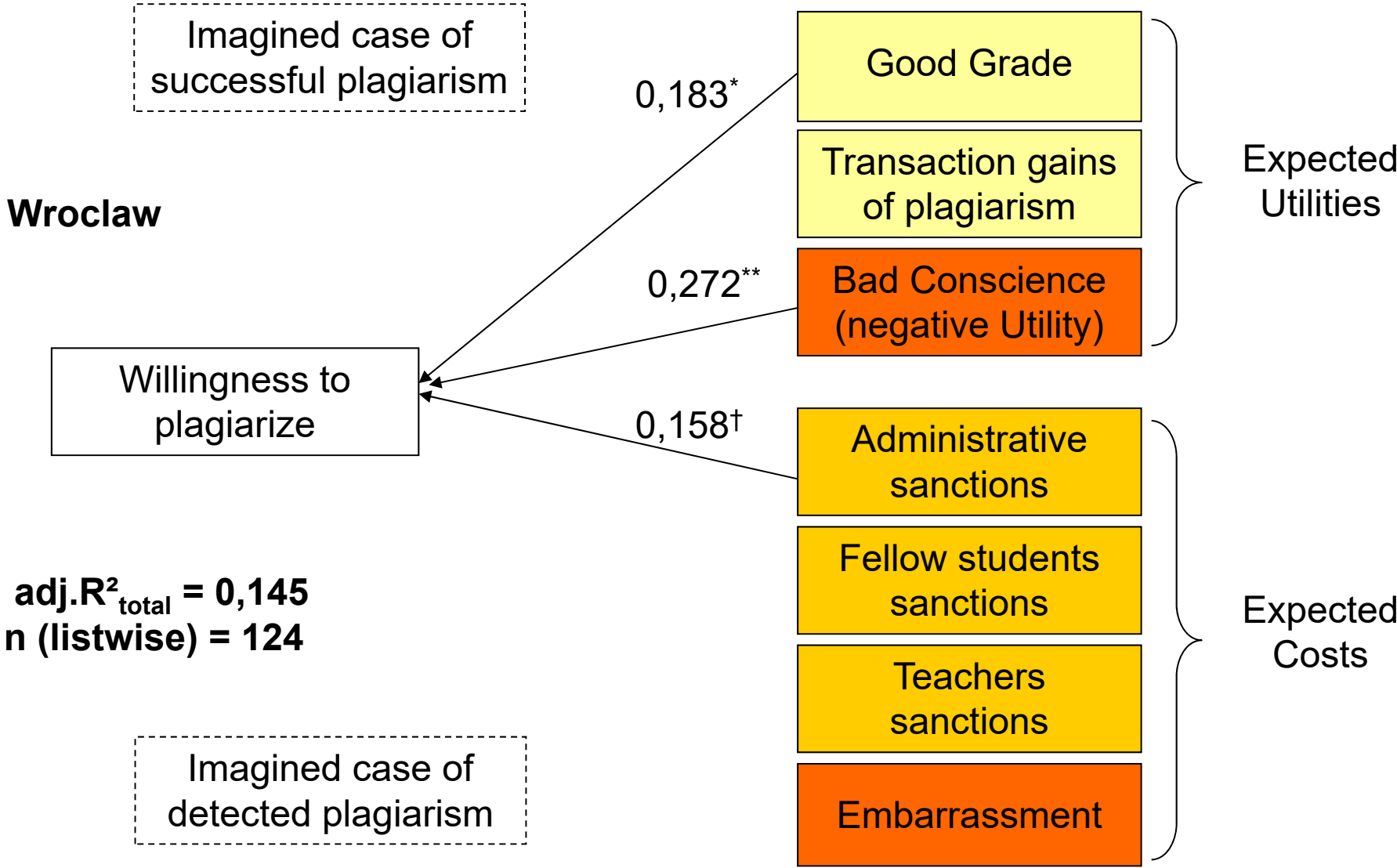


Data: Studying and Ethics, 2010
Source: Own computations

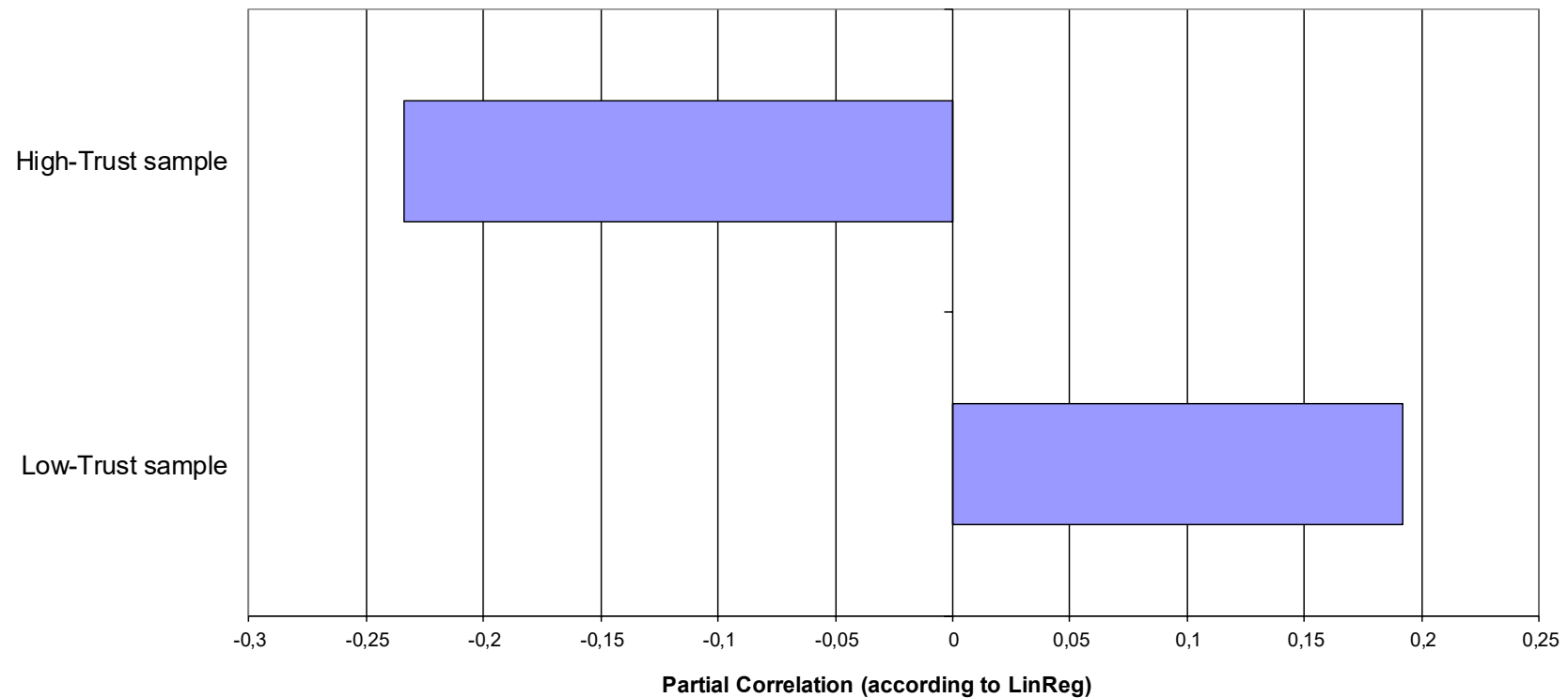
Result 1

The higher the level of generalized trust within a student sample, the lower is on average the willingness to plagiarize among students.

Low-trust-sample (LinReg: Standardized Coefficients)



Reverse effect of expected administrative sanctions within High-trust- and Low-trust-S.



Data: Studying and Ethics 2010
Source: Own computations

Research Question 3

Is it possible to explain sample-related differences of the aggregated frequency of plagiarism with respect to different perceptions of the cost-utility-structure of plagiarizing activity within high-trust- and low-trust-samples?

(Basic assumption of Methodological Individualism)

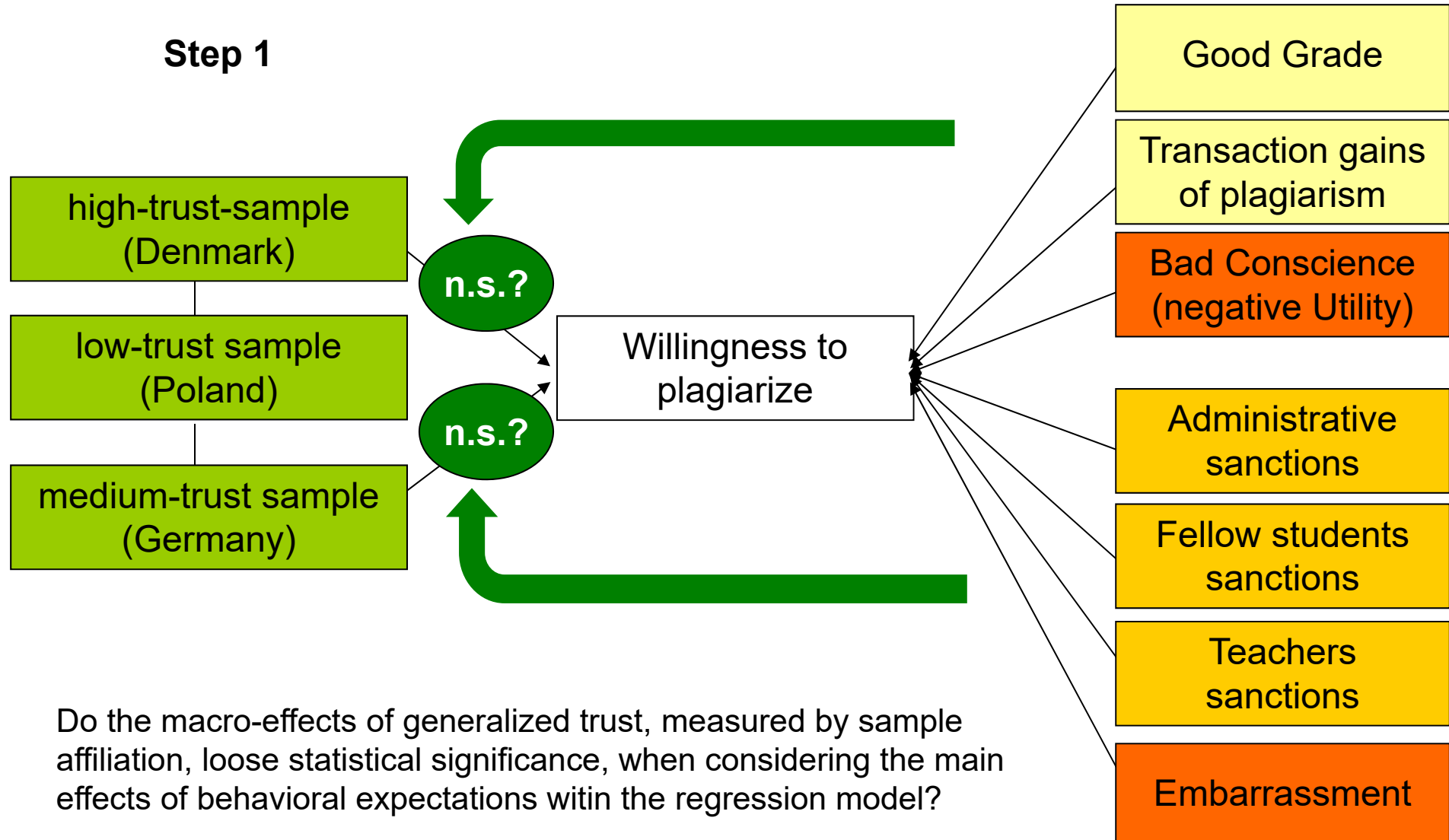
Theory	Research Question	Method & Data	Results 3	Conclusion
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**Macro-Dimension:
Cultural makeup**

Main-Effect-Model

**Micro-Dimension:
Behavioral Expectations**

Step 1



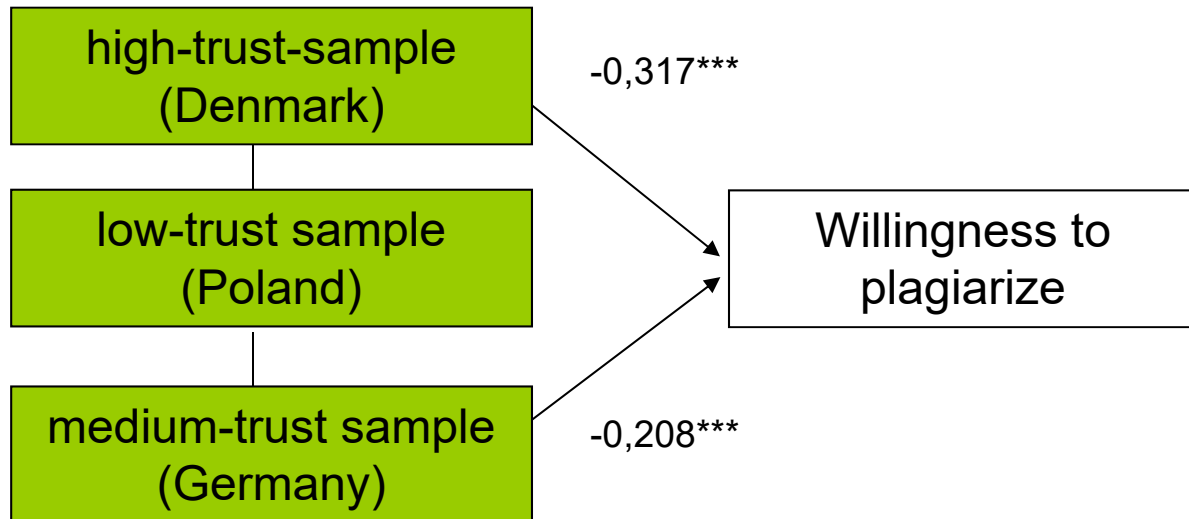
Do the macro-effects of generalized trust, measured by sample affiliation, lose statistical significance, when considering the main effects of behavioral expectations within the regression model?

Total Sample, Main Effects

(Standardized Coefficients)

Step 1.1

$\text{adj.}R^2_{\text{total}} = 0,099$
 $n \text{ (listwise)} = 1115$



Good Grade

Transaction gains
of plagiarism

Bad Conscience
(negative Utility)

Administrative
sanctions

Fellow students
sanctions

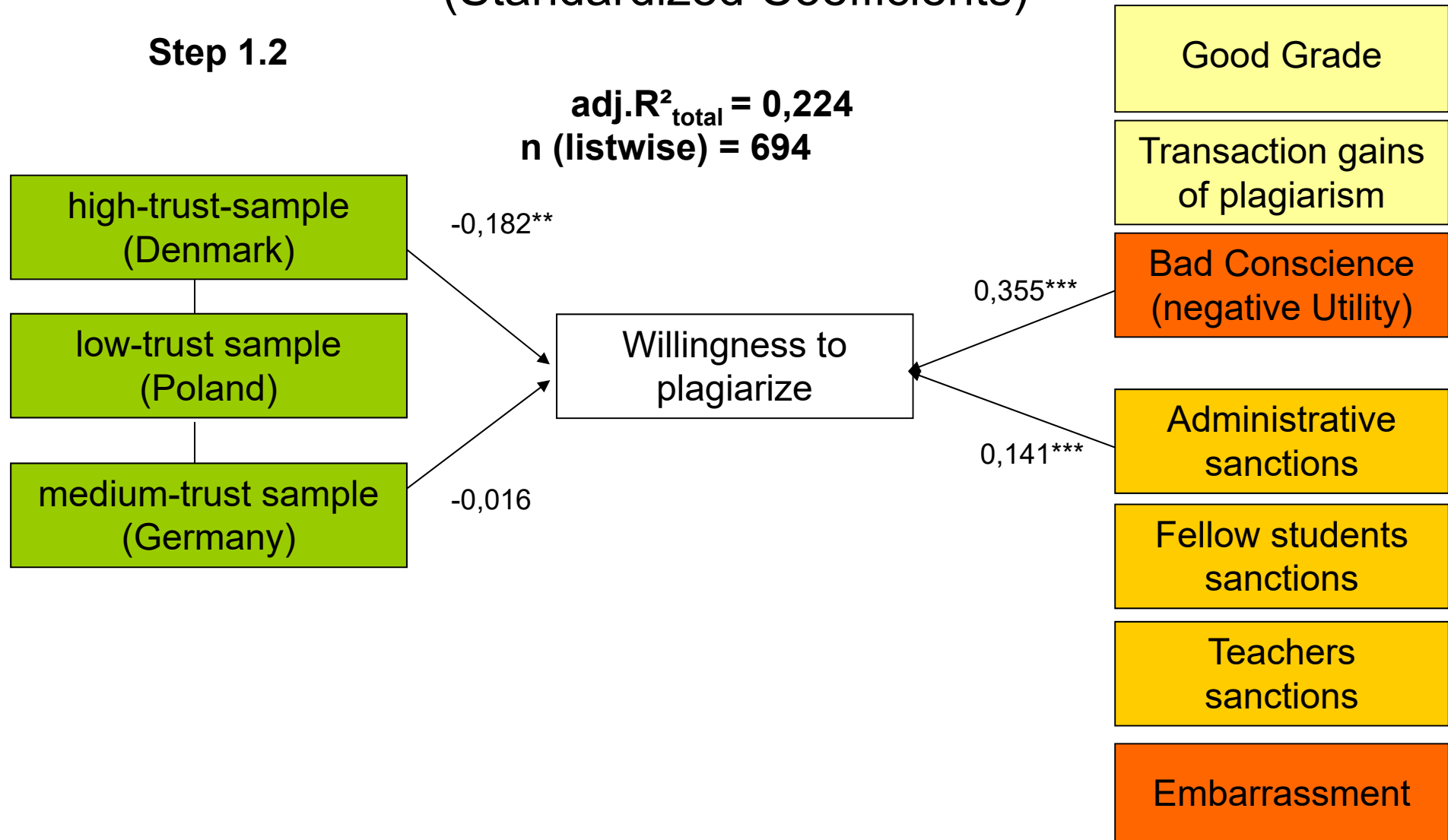
Teachers
sanctions

Embarrassment

Total Sample, Main Effects

(Standardized Coefficients)

Step 1.2

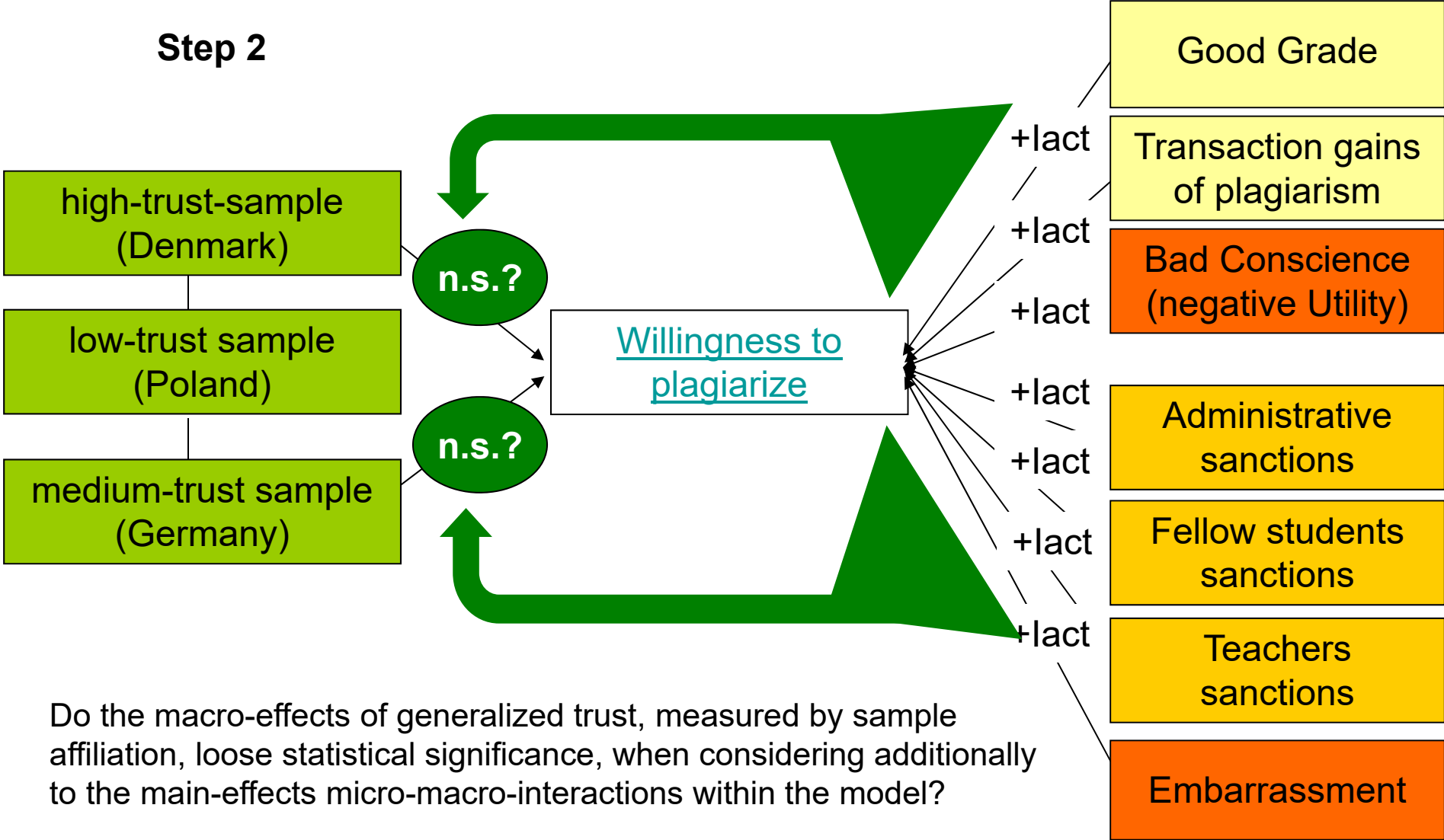


**Macro-Dimension:
Cultural makeup**

Interaction-Effect-Model

**Micro-Dimension:
Behavioral Expectations**

Step 2



Do the macro-effects of generalized trust, measured by sample affiliation, lose statistical significance, when considering additionally to the main-effects micro-macro-interactions within the model?

Empirical Limitations

- Country-comparison without representative data
- High variance of sample size within multivariate analyses because of non-respondents
- Fading-out of the organisational environment of surveyed students
(institutional framing and ethical climate within universities)
- No possibility to apply software programmes of multilevel analyses