

# What is Structural Equation Modeling?

## Basic Introduction to PLS-SEM in SEMinR

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# Welcome

- Structural equation modeling using **SEMinR**
- Basic course: 7 videos
- Focus on **partial least squares** structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) - as opposed to **covariance-based** structural equation modeling (CB-SEM)

# What is Structural Equation Modeling?

1. Why use structural equation modeling, anyway?
2. Properties
3. Components
4. Process of estimating a model

# Why structural equation modeling?

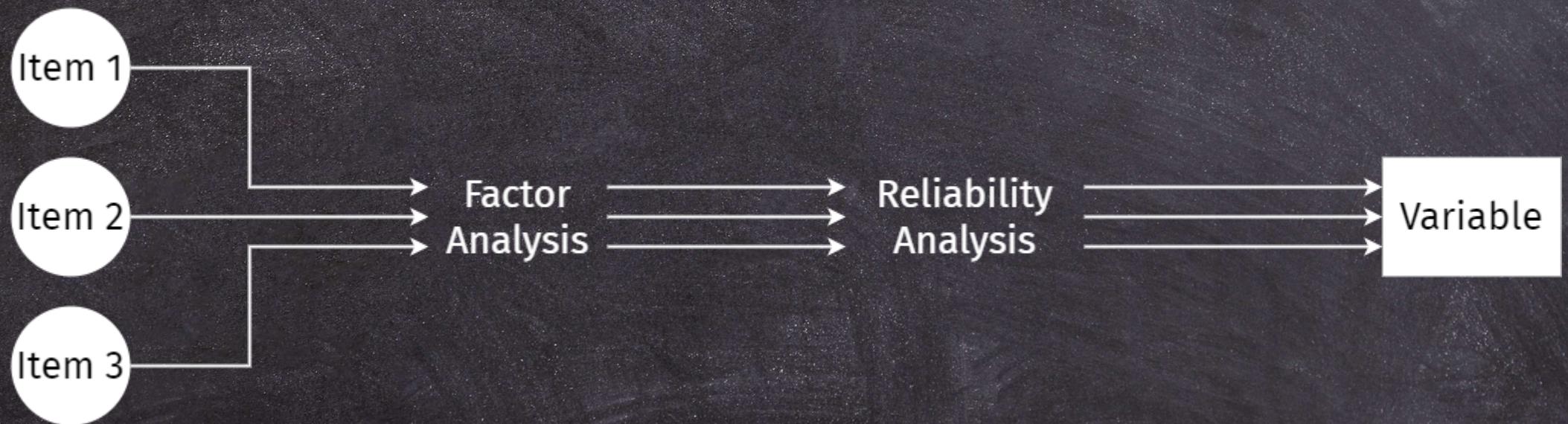
As social scientists, we study human properties (operationalized as **variables**) and **how** they are related.

- Human variables: Often impossible to measure directly.
- How: Ideally, what causes what?

# Why structural equation modeling?

From properties to **variables**...

... using survey items:



# Why structural equation modeling?

From association between **variables**...



... to causation?



# Why structural equation modeling?

Regression equations can be reversed.

DV is height

$$\text{height} = b \times \text{attitude}_{\text{smoking}} + c$$

DV is attitude towards smoking

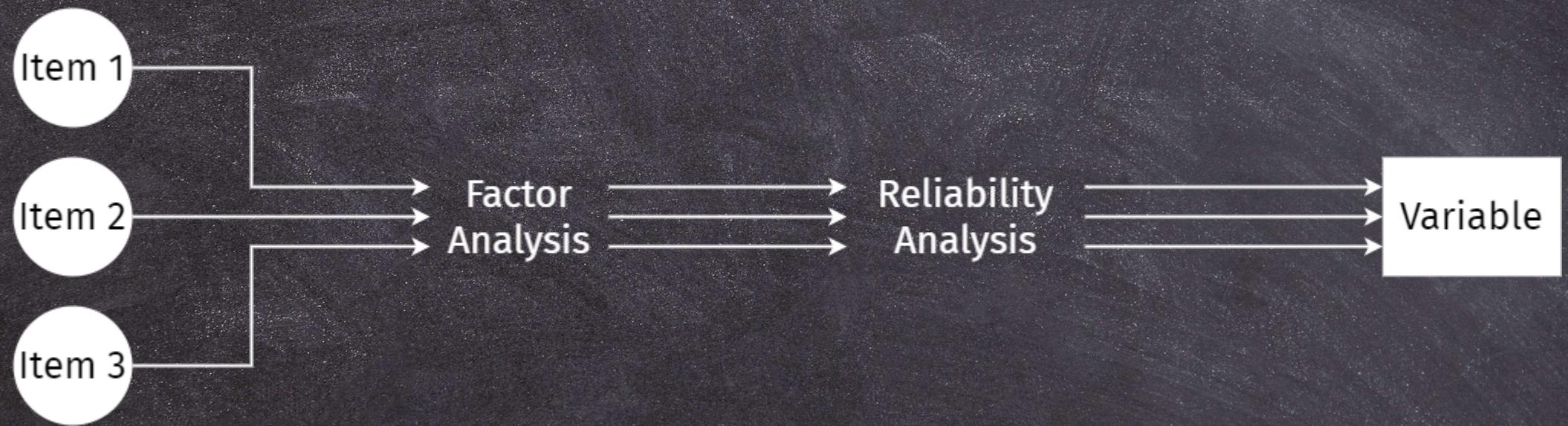
$$\text{attitude}_{\text{smoking}} = \frac{\text{height} - c}{b}$$

Both sides are mathematically equivalent. There is no causation in math.

# Why structural equation modeling?

Gold standard of causal statistics: Randomized control trial  
(put graphic in here)

... using survey items:



# Why structural equation modeling?

From association between **variables**...



... to causation?



# Why structural equation modeling?

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# Why structural equation modeling?

# What are the advantages of SEM?

Combines

- factor analysis
- regression equation

Allows for

- mediation analysis
- causal interpretation

# Types of SEM

- CB-SEM
- VB-SEM / PLS-SEM

# Components of a SEM

- latent variables (constructs)
- manifest variables (indicators) Relationships between those components form
- structural model: relationships between constructs (unidirectional in PLS-SEM)
- measurement model: relationships between constructs and their indicators

# Graphical representation of SEM - example with mobi data set

# Underlying math

Process of estimating a SEM - sequence  
of our videos



# SeminR Model

# Review