

Multi-Item Scale for Project:

Islamist attitudes among young Muslims in Germany (English Version)

General Information:

Note: These items were tested in German, Arabic and Turkish. This is an English translation of the original German wordings.

Filter: only if question 3=yes (respondent feels belonging to a religious community)

Question Text:

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements.

[Bitte geben Sie an, wie sehr Sie den nachfolgenden Aussagen zustimmen.]

Answer Categories:

do not agree at all *[stimme überhaupt nicht zu]*

rather not agree *[stimme eher nicht zu]*

medium approval *[mittlere Zustimmung]*

rather agree *[stimme eher zu]*

fully agree *[stimme voll und ganz zu]*

Findings for Answer Categories:

In the Turkish translation, the second and fourth answer options mean "do not agree" and "agree" respectively; the middle category means "agree somewhat" (TR07, TR08). Thus, the scale in Turkish does not have a balanced response option in the middle. The German wording for the middle category is "mittlere Zustimmung", which is also not a balanced opinion but rather implies consent. When revising the scale, attention should be paid to what the middle category should express.

Recommendations for Answer Categories:

Response Options: According to the test subjects, the scale points are translated differently in the two foreign languages; the gradations are different. This should be reconsidered.

Moreover, the middle category does not reflect a balanced opinion in its current form.

Findings for Multi-Item Scale:

This item battery is the first time that individual test persons refuse to answer. An Arabic-speaking subject answers only the fourth statement (AR11); a Turkish-speaking subject answer none of the four items (TR08). The reasons are set out below.

The term "organization"

Several test persons criticize the fact that the term "organization" is not defined in more detail. This leads to different effects. Thus, one of the refusers decides not to reply because he does not know which organization is meant and what he would support with his consent (TR08). Another respondent chooses the middle answer option ("middle agreement") because it depends on the type of organization (DE03).

This lack of clarity in the interpretation of the term "organization" also leads to uncertainty in other terms. For example, a respondent spontaneously asks "*What is the donation for?*" at the second item, and when the interviewer does not define this precisely, the respondent chooses to answer "do not agree at all" under these premises (DE01). With the third item, the same test person asks which rights are meant and finally chooses "rather disagree" due to the uncertainty.

Other test persons have a clear but strongly divergent understanding of the term organization. Some think exclusively of moderate organizations that provide information about Islam or contribute to its integration in Germany. Most of them cannot name a concrete organization. Exceptions are the group "Read!", which is named by two test persons (DE02, DE05). Another test person calls the group "Diyanet" (TR09). In none of the cases can the test persons explain exactly what the group does. Other examples remain vague: organizations defending religious freedom, including the right to wear or not to wear a headscarf, "*approaching schools and day-care centers*" (DE03), or donation organizations in general and for crisis areas (TR06, TR08).

Other test persons, on the other hand, think of extremist organizations in general (AR14, DE05), describe them as a "*group that misunderstands Islam*" (DE01) or name ISIS (AR11) and Jihad as an extreme example (AR13). These test persons show a negative attitude towards the items.

The term "fighting"

The word for "fighting" is not figuratively usable in the Arabic translation; two test persons express amusement and wonder at the word (AR13, AR14). One subject even understands the word in such a way that it would include killing.

The Arabic-speaking respondent who leaves the first three items unanswered justifies his behavior by saying that it would be misinterpreted as advocating religion (AR11). It can be assumed that he did not find the fourth item so critical, because the verb "to fight" does not appear in it, but "to support".

However, it must be noted that even a German-speaking test person understands the German word "kämpfen" in the literal sense as a physical confrontation (DE01).

The term "religious group"

The concept of a religious group is equated with Islam in general or the community of its mosque. It is not interpreted negatively and does not cause any problems of understanding.

Answer selection

In those who imagine moderate organizations, the test persons answer the items in the sense of the question intention. While some test persons like to actively promote their faith in various forms (TR10), some are only willing to engage in certain activities (DE03, DE04). Still others would prefer to spend their time differently (AR14) or describe religion as a private matter that should not be made public (DE05, TR09).

However, the question in its present form primarily reflects the interpretation of the terms "organization" and "fighting". Agreement to the items is to be interpreted as meaning that a respondent thought more strongly of moderate organizations and peaceful advocacy of faith. Rejection of the items can either mean that a test person does not want to stand up for their religion, or that they suspect or fear that extremist organizations and acts of violence are meant by this question.

An Arabic-speaking test person has the items read out to him in German. She interprets these items in a peaceful sense. It recommends using the word "foundation" in Arabic instead of the word "organization" (AR13).

Recommendations for Multi-Item Scale:

Question: In the question text, the verb "to fight" should be replaced by "to enter" or "to take action". This is particularly important in Arabic, but would also unify the understanding of the German question.

The nature of the organization should be clarified in the question text or replaced by a clearly peaceful term such as "foundation".

Cognitive Techniques:

General Probing, Comprehension Probing, Specific Probing,

All Items for Question(Question Text):

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements.

[Bitte geben Sie an, wie sehr Sie den nachfolgenden Aussagen zustimmen.]

-> Not Tested Items:

Item Text:

I would join an organization that fights for the rights of my religious group. *[Ich würde einer Organisation beitreten, die für die Rechte meiner religiösen Gruppe kämpft.]*

Question Topic:

Religion & culture/ Worldview & religiosity

Construct:

Willingness to participate in actions/activities

Item Text:

I would donate money to an organization that fights for the rights of my religious group. *[Ich würde einer Organisation Geld spenden, die für die Rechte meiner religiösen Gruppe kämpft.]*

Question Topic:

Religion & culture/ Worldview & religiosity

Construct:

Willingness to participate in actions/activities

Item Text:

I would give my time (e.g. writing letters, distributing leaflets, recruiting people, etc.) to work for an organization that fights for the rights of my religious group. *[Ich würde meine Zeit dafür hergeben (z. B. Briefe schreiben, Flugblätter verteilen, Leute anwerben usw.), für eine Organisation zu arbeiten, die für die Rechte meiner religiösen Gruppe kämpft.]*

Question Topic:

Religion & culture/ Worldview & religiosity

Construct:

Willingness to participate in actions/activities

Item Text:

I would take the time and participate in public rallies, protests or demonstrations to support my religious group. *[Ich würde mir die Zeit nehmen und mich an öffentlichen Kundgebungen, Protesten oder Demonstrationen beteiligen, um meine religiöse Gruppe zu unterstützen.]*

Question Topic:

Religion & culture/ Worldview & religiosity

Construct:

Willingness to participate in actions/activities