

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 wording.

Filter: only if question 31=yes (respondent feels belonging to a religious community)

Question Text:

Please tick how much you agree with the following statements.

[Bitte kreuzen Sie an, wie sehr Sie den folgenden 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 Multi-Item Scale:

One test person changes his answer at one point, several test persons do not answer individual items or only after some hesitation. Looking at the explanations of these test persons, their refusal to answer seems to be due to the fact that they are unsure what kind of scenario they should imagine among the items. They do not want to agree in case of terrorist behavior, but they also do not want to refuse if the commitment for their religion is of fundamental importance to them. Individual test persons state that this type of question is very personal and can be interpreted as provocative (TR08, TR10, AR11, AR13). This is illustrated, among other things, by the fact that the last item that asks directly about personal willingness to make sacrifices is the one that most often goes unanswered. In the case of at least one test person, the interviewer suspects that in a selfadministered version she would have dropped out at this point.

Introduction

One Arabic respondent criticized the formulation of the introductory question text "Please tick how much you agree with the following statements", which was bumpy in Arabic (AR14). She clearly prefers the introduction as used in question 40: "Please indicate how

much you agree with the following statements".

Item sequence and direction of the scale

In some cases, the different polarity of the items leads to test persons indicating agreement instead of disagreement (or vice versa), and their explanations do not match their answers (DE03, TR09). One of these test persons notices only on the second reading that refusal to accept the first statement would mean that she thinks it makes sense to sacrifice her life for religion (TR09). After that she answers correctly. Another test person first thinks that the third item should say the opposite of the first one, but then notices that he or she has overlooked a negation (TR08).

The sequence of the items also causes confusion for individual test persons with regard to the second item. They are unsure what is meant by "personal possessions" in the second item, or interpret it on the basis of the preceding and following items in such a way that their lives must also be meant by it (DE01, DE05).

With the exception of individual problems in classifying the second item, the test persons succeed very well in differentiating the items from each other. While for some people the first and third items say the same thing, other test persons distinguish very clearly whether they generally consider it pointless to sacrifice their lives and whether they would be personally prepared to do so (TR06, TR10, AR13).

Ambiguity of the questions

A test person initially refuses to answer the question "It is pointless to sacrifice one's life for religion" because it depends too much on the concrete situation. However, while explaining this, he amends the answer to "do not agree at all" on the grounds that it would be justified in order to protect his own family (TR08). The test person leaves the second item unanswered, because he cannot think of a suitable example situation.

With regard to the second item, one respondent complains that he does not understand where his possessions should go and on what grounds (DE04) and therefore rejects the item. Another one distinguishes between unnecessary material possessions, which she would be willing to give up, and vital possessions, such as food and drink, where she would only give up excess. This test person therefore calculates a mean value and answers "medium approval" (DE05).

One respondent explains in relation to the first item: *"I found this question difficult, with my... conflict of conscience [laughs]. Whether I would really sacrifice my life, I don't know, because I simply have this-this uncertainty. It's so situational. If I really know I'm saving my religion at that moment, then... [laughs again] oh, I really don't know! That's why I had a hard time... The conflict of conscience is like this: This religion is held very, very highly. And as a child you see it, but as an adult opinion is divided - also inwardly, also in me. Of course, that is still there, that my religion, my language, everything, makes me what I am now - but it is not everything that I am. This is the conflict"*(TR10). The test person chooses "medium approval". Also, with regard to the second item, the test person chooses "medium approval", with the justification of uncertainty *"if it would do any good"*.

Translation of the scale

The tested item battery is based on the scale of "martyrdom" by Bélanger et al (2014)18 and refers to the willingness to sacrifice oneself for an important cause. For the present study it was modified to specifically ask about the willingness to sacrifice oneself for one's religion. In the cognitive pretest it turned out that the Arabic translation still contained the original form of the scale, which refers to the willingness to sacrifice for "an important cause" and not to "religion". All four Arabic test persons notice this. One respondent emphasizes that her answers refer to the Arabic variant and she would have answered completely differently (i.e. rejecting it) if it had referred to religion (AR12). She had thought of her family as something very important to her and not Islam. In Turkish, according to one test person, all three items are presented in the ego form (TR10). In Turkish, the question is therefore addressed more specifically to the interviewee: "It is pointless for me to sacrifice my life for religion".

Recommendations for Multi-Item Scale:

Instruction: We recommend to keep the introductory text constant over all item batteries. At least in Arabic, the formulation from question 40 is preferred. This should be discussed with a translation team and handled uniformly.

Question: To avoid confusion, the second item asking for personal possession should be placed at the beginning of the item battery.

We recommend poling all items equally and avoiding negations, so that consent is an indication of sacrifice in all cases. Negations are cognitively more difficult for respondents to process and often lead to misunderstandings.

The translation of the Arabic items must be checked and adapted to the topic "religion".

Response Option: See question 40.

Cognitive Techniques:

General Probing, Specific Probing.

All Items for Question(Question Text):

Please tick how much you agree with the following statements.

[Bitte kreuzen Sie an, wie sehr Sie den folgenden Aussagen zustimmen.]

-> Not Tested Items:

Item Text:

It is pointless to sacrifice your life for religion. [*Es ist sinnlos, sein Leben für die Religion zu opfern.*]

Question Topic:

Religion & culture/ Worldview & religiosity

Construct:

Willingness to sacrifice one's life for religion

Item Text:

I would be willing to give up all my personal possessions for my religion. [*Ich wäre bereit dazu, meinen gesamten persönlichen Besitz für meine Religion aufzugeben.*]

Question Topic:

Religion & culture/ Worldview & religiosity

Construct:

Willingness to sacrifice one's life for religion

Item Text:

I would not be willing to give my life for my religions. [*Ich wäre nicht dazu bereit, mein Leben für meine Religion zu geben.*]

Question Topic:

Religion & culture/ Worldview & religiosity

Construct:

Willingness to sacrifice one's life for religion