

Multi-Item Scale for Project:

International Social Survey Programme (ISSP) 2015 (English Version)

Question Text:

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
[Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen zu oder nicht zu?]

Instruction:

(Please make a cross in EVERY line!) *[(Bitte machen Sie in JEDER Zeile ein Kreuz!)]*

Answer Categories:

Strongly agree *[Stimme voll und ganz zu]*
Agree *[Stimme zu]*
Neither nor *[Weder noch]*
Disagree *[Stimme nicht zu]*
Strongly disagree *[Stimme überhaupt nicht zu]*
Don't know *[Kann ich nicht sagen]*

Findings for Multi-Item Scale:

One test person (TP 02) has difficulties in understanding the term "organization" in all three items of the question battery. According to her own statement, she does not interpret it as the equivalent of "company", but to the effect that she has to organize something herself in her work: *"I understand organization to mean that I help with the production process or the planning of the day. I don't know that now."* Because of this difficulty in understanding, for all three items this test person answers "I can't say."

Another subject (TP 08) states that he currently has two jobs (research assistant at a university, fitness trainer) and that he has to choose one of the two jobs when answering these items. In order to answer consistently, the respondent thinks of his second job (fitness trainer) in all three statements, but could just as well have thought of his first job or alternately of one of the two jobs.

With regard to the battery of questions as a whole, it is also noticeable that a test person (TP 10) thinks of different activities in his previous professional life when answering the three statements and not only of his current job. When answering statements a) and b), this test person thinks of his previous job as an insurance agent, but when

answering statement c), he thinks of her current job as a cleaner in a bakery. In addition, four test persons (TP 03, TP 04, TP 09, TP 13) state that they did not interpret the three statements uniformly, but sometimes thought of the profession they had learned and sometimes of the company or the job they were doing.

Recommendations for Multi-Item Scale:

As with question 4, we recommend supplementing the question with an instruction for the respondents. This should make it clear that the focus of the statements is on the company/organization where one is currently employed and that people who have several professional activities should only refer to their main job. A possible formulation would be:

"The following statements are about the company/organization where you are currently employed. If you currently have more than one professional activity, please answer the statements only for your main professional activity.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?" [*Bei den folgenden Aussagen geht es um die Firma/Organisation, bei der Sie momentan beschäftigt sind. Falls Sie derzeit mehr als einer beruflichen Tätigkeit nachgehen, beantworten Sie die Aussagen bitte nur für Ihre hauptberufliche Tätigkeit.*

Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen zu oder nicht zu?"]

Cognitive Techniques:

General Probing, Specific Probing.

All Items for Question(Question Text):

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?
[Inwieweit stimmen Sie den folgenden Aussagen zu oder nicht zu?]

-> Tested Items:

Item Text:

a) I am willing to work harder than I have to in order to contribute to the success of my company/ organization. [*Ich bin bereit, härter zu arbeiten als ich muss, um zum Erfolg meiner Firma/ Organisation beizutragen.*]

Recommendations:

We recommend adding the word "current" to this statement (see item c) to make it clear that the statement refers to current and not former employment. We also suggest that the subordinate clause be placed at the beginning of the sentence to prevent it from being ignored when answering the item. A possible formulation would be:

"To contribute to the success of my current company/organization, I am willing to work harder than I normally have to." [*Um zum Erfolg meiner jetzigen Firma/Organisation beizutragen, bin ich bereit, härter zu arbeiten als ich normalerweise muss.*"]

Findings:

Two thirds (n = 10) of the test persons agree or strongly agree with the statement.

Test person 05 spontaneously comments that it is unclear to her whether this item refers only to the company/organization she is currently working for or whether it is more a general attitude: *"I ask myself, is this about my company where I am currently working? Or, if I were to work for another company tomorrow, that I could now name my future company? I am just thinking about whether this is a general question. Am I generally willing to do these things for my company or is it a snapshot of the current company?"* (TP 05). This respondent states that an explicit reference to the "current" company, as in item c), would clarify the intention of the question and facilitate the answer.

The spontaneous comments of test subject 08 and test subject 12 make it clear that item a) may be difficult for civil servants or employees in non-profit organizations to answer because these companies/organizations are not geared to maximize profits and it is therefore unclear how the success of the companies/organizations can be measured:

- *"So now I'm thinking more about my second job, not my main job at the university. Because working at the university doesn't really help anyone because it's just not a company. It's just a different organisational structure. With the other job, where profit is made, I'm willing to do it."* (TP 08)
- *"That's hard to answer because I'm a civil servant."* (TP 12)

When asked whether the respondents thought about their company/organization, their job or their profession when answering the statement, nine respondents stated that they thought about their company/organization (as intended by the questionnaire developers). However, one of these nine test persons (TP 06, strongly agree) only referred "indirectly" to the success of the company/organization: *"As a scientist I work more for myself, but of course I contribute to the success of the organization. But first and foremost I work for myself. I'm willing to work harder to get my habilitation as soon as possible."* (TP 06)

Test person 14 (strongly disagree) thought of their current job when answering the statement, and test person 02 (don't know) - due to the misinterpretation of the term "organization" - thought of different activities in different companies.

The remaining four test subjects (TP 03, TP 04, TP 09, TP 13) ignored the subordinate clause "to contribute to the success of my company/organization" when answering the statement and only referred to whether they were generally willing or able to work harder than necessary (for whatever purpose) when answering the item:

- *"That always pays off once in a while. If I work a few overtime hours, that you can stay at home for a day." (TP 03)*
- *"I have already worked as a meat cutter on the assembly line, sometimes 20 hour shifts. So I guess it can't get any worse than that. Well, I'm certainly willing to work harder." (TP 04)*
- *"I can't work any harder. I'm in sales, there's a day and then there's a day. So I'm not under pressure to achieve certain goals. I don't have to generate mandatory sales." (TP 09)*
- *"I am of the opinion that my work is of good quality and that I contribute enough. Therefore I would not want to work even harder. But I would not want to work less either. It's okay the way it is now." (TP 13)*

Question Topic:

Job and career/ Job motivation & attitudes

Construct:

Commitment to employer

Item Text:

b) I am proud to work for my company/organization. [*Ich bin stolz darauf, für meine Firma/Organisation zu arbeiten.*]

Recommendations:

Again, we recommend adding the word "current" to the statement to make it clear that the statement refers to current and not former employment:

"I am proud to work for my current company/organization." [*"Ich bin stolz darauf, für meine jetzige Firma/Organisation zu arbeiten."*]

Findings:

The majority of the test persons (n = 11) agree or strongly agree with this statement. Two test persons (TP 09, TP 15) answer with "neither nor" and two other test persons answer with "Don't know" (TP 02, TP 14). Subject 02 justifies her "don't know" answer with difficulties in understanding the term "organization" (see general findings on question 5) and subject 14 states that she has problems with the answer scale in this statement: She can only "rather agree" and since this category is not offered, she chooses "Don't know."

With the exception of test person 02, all test persons stated that they had thought of their company/organization when answering this statement. Four of these respondents (TP 09, TP 11, TP 13, TP 15) also note that the phrase "be proud" is too strong or somewhat exaggerated:

- *"I'm not really proud. I like the work, but pride is a bit over the top. I would just never leave there because I enjoy it. I like working there."* (TP 09)
- *"The "pride" thing is always one of those things. We Germans have a problem with that. I like working for the company and I'm willing to do a bit more for it. That's why I "agree" and not "totally agree". That's too absolute for me."* (TP 11)
- *"Sometimes one is a little afraid to express such opinions, with "proud to work for this company". It's maybe a little American-inspired. But I can't say that I don't value my company, so I rather agree with that. Although I personally would not make such a statement right now."* (TP 13)
- *"There is no special "pride" in that for me."* (TP 15)

Question Topic:

Job and career/ Job motivation & attitudes

Construct:

Commitment to employer

Item Text:

c) I would refuse another, better paid job to stay with my current company/organization. [*Ich würde eine andere, besser bezahlte Stelle ablehnen, um bei meiner jetzigen Firma/Organisation zu bleiben.*]

Recommendations:

We recommend avoiding the negative wording "reject" in this statement, as this causes difficulties in using the response scale. A possible reformulation would be:

"I would stay with my current company/organization, even if they offered me another, better-paid position." [*Ich würde bei meiner jetzigen Firma/Organisation bleiben, auch wenn man mir eine andere, besser bezahlte Stelle anbieten würde.*]

Findings:

Three test persons (TP 02, TP 11, TP 14) answered with "Don't know" and justified their answer with the fact that it depends on the respective circumstances whether one would refuse such a position or not. Several factors (and not only payment) would play a role here: *"The statement is formulated too generally. There are certainly 1,000 other reasons why you would turn something down, and not just because the current company is so great. It depends on the individual case, the situation. For example, whether the head of the other company is good."* (TP 14)

The remaining test persons agree (n = 5) and disagree (n = 7) with the statement in approximately equal parts. However, the questions of the test leaders made it clear that in this second group a total of three test persons (TP 03, TP 04, TP 09) had ticked off a "wrong" answer because of the negatively formulated item and the associated difficulty in expressing with the answer scale that they wanted to stay with the current company or felt comfortable with it, and actually wanted to answer "agree" instead of "disagree":

- *"I'm walking to work in five minutes. I enjoy my job. And then for 2 or 3 euros more a month, I wouldn't drive an hour or so."* (TP 03, disagree)
- *"Well, actually, I don't agree with that (that I would switch). It's going well at the moment and a better paid job, that would be a new challenge again and why not keep something that's going well?"* (TP 04, disagree)
- *"I don't know how I would like to work somewhere else, that's the problem. Maybe I would improve financially, but maybe not in terms of the way I interact with people at work. You have to consider that."* (TP 09, disagree)

Two other test persons (TP 07, TP 08) stated that they had difficulties in answering the statement due to its negative formulation:

- *"No, I would stay with my company. "Reject"...? So I have to agree here, right? I agree to disagree? Yes, that's right." (TP 07)*
- *"I had to read that statement twice. I would have simply formulated the statement differently. I would always phrase it positively, instead of "reject" then "accept". Like "I would accept another, better paid job to make more money or to have advantages over my current company." (TP 08)*

With the exception of test person 02 and test person 04, all test persons state on request that they thought of their company or organization when answering the statement.

Question Topic:

Job and career/ Job motivation & attitudes

Construct:

Commitment to employer