

Question in Project:

PaCo - Mechanisms of panel conditioning in longitudinal surveys: Questions on social desirability, gender roles, and environment (English Version)

Question Topic:

Environment/ Environmental knowledge & perception

Construct:

Environmental knowledge: Environmental protection sign

General Information:

Note: This item was tested in German. This is an English translation of the original German wording.

Question Text:

What does the environmental protection label of the Umweltbund look like?
[Wie sieht das Umweltschutzzeichen des Umweltbundes aus?]

Answer Categories:

Green tree *[Grüner Baum]*

Stamp: Registered with the Federal Environmental Agency *[Stempel: Registriert beim Umweltbundesamt]*

Imprint: environmentally certified *[Impressum: umweltzertifiziert]*

Green federal eagle *[Grüner Bundesadler]*

Blue angel *[Blauer Engel]*

Don't know *[Weiß nicht]*

Cognitive Techniques:

Category Selection Probe, Confidence Rating, Specific Probe

Findings for Question:

Do the test persons have problems understanding or answering the question?

Of the ten test persons, half chose the correct answer option "Blue angel" (TP 03, 05, 06, 08, 10). Test person 07 chose the answer "Green tree" and the remaining four test persons stated that they did not know the answer to the question (TP 01, 02, 04, 09).

Of those who said they did not know the answer, three said that some of the signs seemed familiar to them, but they were unsure and therefore did not give an answer:

- *"Because, in my opinion, I have never come into contact with this sign and I have no idea at all what it looks like. [...] So a few have already told me something, but I was just unsure. So the 'Blue Angel' means something to me, but I don't believe that this is the protection mark of the Umweltbund."* (TP 01)
- *"Honestly, because I really don't know. I have thought about it, but I don't know. [...] I've seen some of the signs already, but now I don't know what they belong to in each case."* (TP 04)
- *"Due to that I took 'don't know'. I don't even know if the Federal Office has its own label. No, I know the 'Blue Angel', that's clear. It can't be the green federal eagle, that's illogical. I could imagine an imprint like 'environmentally tested'. I do not know such a stamp. And the green tree rather not. I could also guess 'environmentally tested', but I don't know. I just do not know."* (TP 09)

Other test persons answered intuitively using signs they were familiar with. In some cases, they also found themselves in conflict with the assignment to the Umweltbund.:

- *"I had to think about that for a long time too. I know the 'Blue Angel'. But I had to think, is that really the environmental protection label of the German Environmental Protection Agency or maybe something else? But I found the other answers not so plausible or I haven't really seen them yet."* (TP 03; Answer: "Blue Angel ")
- *"Because I've seen it before, the 'Blue Angel'. But I don't know if it's part of the Umweltbund."* (TP 05; Answer: "Blue Angel")
- *"That's the only one I've heard of. I have never heard of the others."* (TP 06; Answer: "Blue Angel")
- *"I imagine I've seen this before, but I'm not sure."* (TP 07; Answer: "Green tree")
- *"This can also be the 'Green Tree' or any stamp. There are so many due to now. I really don't know 100 percent. I have decided intuitively."* (TP 08; Answer: "Blue Angel")

Some test persons thus found it difficult to link a sign they knew with the Umweltbund, but it varied whether they actually chose an answer or said they did not know the answer. Some test persons used the exclusion principle and chose the sign that was familiar to them.

How sure are the test persons that their answer is correct?

As can be seen in Table N2_F9, only two test persons were very certain of the correctness of their answer (TP 06, 10). Both test persons had answered the question correctly and stated that they knew the Blue Angel label. They did not mention whether they were familiar with the Blue Angel as a symbol of the Umweltbund, the Federal Environment Agency or another institution.

The other three test persons who had answered the question correctly were "rather certain", "rather uncertain" or even "very uncertain" of their answer (TP 03, 05, 07, 08). They all chose the Blue Angel due to the fact that they were familiar with the label. Their uncertainty stemmed from the fact that they did not know whether this was the mark of the Umweltbund or of another institution. Test persons who had not selected an answer ("Don't know") were not asked for their assessment (TP 01, 02, 04, 09).

How difficult (for the general public) do the test persons think the question is?

As can be seen in Table N3_F9, test persons 06 and 10 trusted their answers and were confident in their correctness, due to the fact that they gave the highest percentages. These test persons inferred others based on their own knowledge and judgment.

Also consistent with perceived certainty were the percentages given by test persons 05 and 07. Due to being "very uncertain" about the correctness of their answers, they inferred that few of the later respondents would know the correct answer.

If we also compare the values given, which are above and below 50%, it becomes apparent that most ($n = 7$) estimated that comparatively few of the later respondents would know the correct answer. Considered across all test persons and answers, the test persons are of the opinion that rather special knowledge is asked here.

Recommendations:

Question: We recommend changing the question text due to the fact that the Blue Angel is not the environmental protection label of the Umweltbund, but of the Federal Environment Agency or the Federal Ministry for the Environment:

"What does the Federal Environmental Agency/Federal Ministry for the Environment's environmental protection label look like?" [Wie sieht das Umweltschutzlabel des Umweltbundesamtes/Bundesumweltministeriums aus?] Answer options: No changes recommended.

Question documented in ZIS (DOI):

<https://zis.gesis.org/DoiId/zis38>