

Issues with Self-Report Measures

- Right to privacy
 - The ethical and potentially risky implications of personal information, esp. when researchers have not been professionally trained.
 - People might withhold information
 - Information cannot be used against them
 - What if we disclose an illegal situation?
 - Is it ethical for an untrained student researchers to ask questions on depression, anxiety etc.

Issues with Self-Report Measures

- Validity and reliability
 - Whether the most-honest participant can provide valid and reliable behavior information
 - It depends on remembering some past event correctly
 - Can people look themselves accurately?

Issues with Self-Report Measures

- Can people look themselves accurately?
- APS Study on professors' rating on themselves
 - 94 % of Prof.'s rated themselves as "doing over average work"
- Offer (et al., 2000) on reliability of episodic memory
 - 61% reported sports as their favorite activities
 - 23% gave the same answer when they asked to recollected their favorite activities

Issues with Self-Report Measures

- Interpretation of individual scores
 - Interpretation of standardized scores
 - Interpretation of non-standardized scores
 - E.g. Two participants responded same to "feeling of stress"
 - How do we know that they mean the same thing

Issues with Self-Report Measures

- We may investigate change in individual scores
- We may compare average rating groups of two randomly assigned samples

What are Open-Ended and Fixed-Choice Items?

- Open-ended items
 - Express feelings and impressions spontaneously
 - E.g., "How do you feel?"
- Fixed-choice items
 - Structured, precoded, closed
 - Gives respondent specified options
 - E.g., Yes-no or multiple choice

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Advantages of Open-Ended Questions

- They do not lead respondents by suggesting specific answers
- They represent an exploratory approach
- They allow respondents to answer in their own expressions
- They make it easier to create a mutual trust between the researcher and the respondent

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Disadvantages of Open-Ended Questions

- They can be time-consuming
- They invite irregular and unrelated responses
- Assessments of reliability can be difficult

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Advantages/Disadvantageous of Fixed Choice Questions

- Advantages/disadvantageous are the reverse of open-ended questions
 - It forces participants' to give responses into predetermined dimensions rather than

Fixed-Choice Questions

- People rate themselves on a given dimension (rating scales)
 - Numerical rating scales
 - Graphical rating scales
 - Forced-choice rating scales

Numerical Scales

- Respondents work with a sequence of defined numbers
 - -2 = strongly disagree
 - -1 = disagree
 - 0 = undecided
 - +1 = agree
 - +2 = strongly agree

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Numerical Scales

- My mind goes blank, and I am unable to think clearly when working with math.
 - 1 = strongly disagree
 - 2 = disagree
 - 3 = undecided
 - 4 = agree
 - 5 = strongly agree
- Getting rid of neutral or undecided responses

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Numerical Scales

- Sometimes you may want to get rid of neutral or undecided responses, and push participants to one or the other side
- My mind goes blank, and I am unable to think clearly when working with math.
 - 1 (-2) = strongly disagree
 - 2 (-1) = disagree
 - 3 (1) = agree
 - 4 (2) = strongly agree

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Graphic Scales

- Respondents indicate ratings on a straight line, resembling a thermometer
 - Unpopular _____ Popular _____
 - Shy _____ Outgoing _____
 - Solitary _____ Gregarious _____

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Graphic Scales

- Segmented graphical scale
- Even number of segments prevent undecided responses
 - Unpopular _; ; ; ; ; ; ; _ Popular
 - Shy _; ; ; ; ; ; ; _ Outgoing
 - Solitary _; ; ; ; ; ; ; _ Gregarious

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Graphic Scales

- Using bipolar items can be a problem, when have mixed emotions about what the are rating
- Bipolar vs. unipolar items
 - Unpopular _____ Popular _____
 - Popular*
 - Not at all _____ Very much

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Forced-Choice Scales

- Respondents choose between two options
 - Which characteristic *best* describes your best friend – honest or intelligent?
 - Circle the *two* characteristics that *best describe* how you feel in your work:
Rewarded Relaxed Appreciated Trusting
- Forced-choice scales are used to overcome the Halo effect

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Rating Errors

- Rating errors (or response biases or rater biases)
- It is important to think about how to overcome certain rating errors
- Types
 - Halo effect
 - Leniency bias
 - Central tendency bias
 - Ceiling effect or floor effect
 - Logical error in rating
 - Acquiescent response set

Halo effect

- "Our judgments of a person's character can be influenced by our overall impression of him or her" (Wikipedia)
- Rating on one attribute influences ratings on other attributes
 - A good-looking target person might be judged to be far more popular than she really is.

Leniency bias

- Rating someone who is very familiar in an unrealistically positive manner
 - Giving only one unfavorable cue word eliminates this bias
- Poor
Fairly Good
Good
Very Good
Excellent

Central Tendency Bias

- Participants hesitate to give extreme ratings and cluster their responses around the center choice
 - Unpopular _;_;;_;;_;;_ Popular
 - Unpopular _;_;;_;;_;;_ Popular

Ceiling and Floor Effect

- If participants make extremely high or extremely low scores, there is no chance to further change these scores in that direction
- Ceiling and floor effects restricts the amount of change
 - Pilot testing when devising our scale

Logical Error in Rating

- Participants give similar ratings for variables that they themselves felt to be logically related but may not occur together in the person being rated
 - Hard working, not outgoing,
 - Construct very precise definitions, and make instructions as explicit as possible

Acquiescent Response Set

- Yea-sayers, some respondents are overly agreeable
 - If they asked whether they agree or disagree, they will almost agree with it.
 - To detect them provide both anti- and pro- items on the same variable
- In reporting results, indicate number of such subjects and exclude them from analyses
- There should be very few yea-sayers. If they are many, we must review our questionnaire