Survey Attitude Scale (SAS): Are Measurements Comparable Among Different Samples of Students from German Higher Education Institutions?

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Relevance & Motivation

General attitudes towards surveys are part of respondent’s motivation for survey participation. There is empirical evidence that these attitudes do predict participant’s willingness to perform supportive actions (online) surveys (de Leeuw et al., 2017; Stocke & Jungermann, 2017). The Survey Attitude Scale (SAS) as proposed by de Leeuw et al. (2010) differentiates between three dimensions:

- survey enjoyment (se),
- survey value (sv) and
- survey burden (sb).

Research Question & Methods

Are the SAS measurements comparable across different online survey samples of students from German Higher Education Institutions (HEI)?

We implemented the nine item short form of the SAS, adopted from the GESIS Online Panel (Struminskaya et al., 2015) at the beginning of three different online surveys for German students and PhD students being conducted recently. To validate the original scale in each dataset we use confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) in a first step. We estimated three independent models with cross loadings for two dimensions to test the latent structure.

Results

Comparing the CFA results, our empirical findings indicate that the latent structure of the SAS is reproducible in all three samples. Factor loadings, indices for model fit as well as reliability scores support the theoretical structure adequately. Nonetheless, Cronbach’s Alpha values for survey burden are fragile in all three samples. Overall, findings support the validity of the proposed nine item short form of the SAS, for new and repeated respondents as well.

Added Value:

By showing that the standardized short SAS instrument works for different samples, we contribute to existing literature. Sítte de Leeuw et al. (2010) analyses are based on four general population surveys, we complete the picture specifically for young highly educated respondents. For further research, we aim to pool our data in the next step to investigate into more sophisticated methods ensuring measurement equivalence (Chen, 2007: factor loadings, intercepts and residual variances).

Literature:


Survey Attitude Scale: Measurement Model by De Leeuw et al. (2010)

Four independent CFA analyses conducted with CentR-panel, LISS-panel, WISO-panel and PPSM-panel

HIBUS Online Access Panel

... online access panel of students from German HEI
... long-standing panel; established in 2000
... data collected in 2017/2018 as part of a survey that addressed panel maintenance and survey methods
... netto sample n = 3,276; response rate: 9.0 %

www.hibus.de

NEPS - Starting Cohort „First Year Students“

... longitudinal study of first-year students from German HEI
... well established panel; since 2000/2002
... data collected in autumn/winter 2018
... netto sample n = 4,939; response rate: 49.8 %

www.neps-data.de

Nacaps - National Academies Panel Study

... large quantitative pretest among doctoral candidates in German HEI
... recently conducted large-scale panel survey
... data collected in spring 2018
... netto sample n = 2,424; response rate: 24.03 %

www.nacaps.de

* Respondents who aborted the survey are not yet included; therefore the sample might differ from prospectively published data.