



Abstract

This dissertation, comprising three studies, was initiated to survey the impact of rating scale formats on satisfaction and dissatisfaction ratings.

Study 1 investigates the effects of variations in *polarity* (bipolar versus unipolar), scale *orientation* (horizontal versus vertical) and *anchoring* (0 to 10, -5 to +5, and Not Numbered) on (1) *overall satisfaction with life* (OSWL) and *overall dissatisfaction with life* (ODWL) ratings, (2) the relationship between OSWL and ODWL, and (3) the relationship between *overall (dis)satisfaction with life* and *(dis)satisfaction in specific domains of life*. The results suggest that rating scale format may impact on the assessment of both *overall (dis)satisfaction with life* and *(dis)satisfaction in different life domains*, as well as on the interrelations among all of these concepts. Such effects were obtained with both *bipolar* and *unipolar* response scales. Moreover, this study has confirmed that satisfaction and dissatisfaction with life show a reciprocal relation, especially when assessed with two independent unipolar rating scales. Our results support that one-way unipolar response scales should be preferred to assess satisfaction and dissatisfaction with life. Linear regression analysis was used to examine the associations between respondents' *overall (dis)satisfaction with life* and *(dis)satisfaction in different life domains (physical health, psychological well-being, social relations, leisure, financial situation, and student life)*. Our results indicate that all discerned satisfaction and dissatisfaction domains contribute significantly to overall (dis)satisfaction with life, with *psychological well-being* as the strongest predictor.

Study 2 presents a structural equation modeling (SEM) approach where four hypothesized models are evaluated to describe the interrelations between *Life Domains Ratings* (LDR), *Overall satisfaction with life* (OSWL), *Overall dissatisfaction with life* (ODWL), and *Subjective Quality of Life* (SQOL). A confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) supports a six-factor model of LDR comprising *physical health, psychological well-being, social relations, leisure, financial situation, and student life*. Further, this study indicates that the factor loadings are affected by the *type of response format* used for the (dis)satisfaction ratings. Our results also indicate that the proposed models of *overall satisfaction with life* (OSWL), *overall dissatisfaction with life* (ODWL) and *subjective quality of life* (SQOL) fit the data well. As in the previous study, again, *psychological well-being* was found to be the strongest predictor of OSWL, ODWL and SQOL.

Study 3 investigates whether the results in studies 1 and 2 can be reproduced using the same scales in a new sample. Our results confirm the findings in the previous studies. Moreover, testing for multiple group invariance of the hypothesized models confirms the cross-validity for all four studied models of LDR, OSWL, ODWL, and SQOL.

Curriculum Vitae

Mehrdad Mazaheri was born in Shiraz, Iran in 1965. He obtained a BSc degree in Clinical Psychology from the University of Tabriz, Iran in 1988 and a MSc degree on Measurement & Evaluation in Psychology from the University of A.T.Tehran, Iran in 1994. In 2002 he was awarded a scholarship from the Ministry of Education of Iran to do his PhD in Psychology at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Brussels, Belgium. During his PhD studies his research was mainly on psychometrical aspects of Quality Of Life measurement.

Career

- 1994-2002 S&B University (Iran), Full-time lecturer.
 - 1994-2002 Mental and Educational Counselor
 - 1998-2002 Head of Department of Psychology
 - 1999-2002 Member of the Research Committee of the Literature and Human Sciences faculty.
- 1995-2002 Family and Marriage Counselor in the Family Counseling Centre, Zahedan, Iran
- 1999-2002 Member of the Research Committee of the TV & Radio Centre, Zahedan, Iran
- 2002-2006 Voluntary Research Assistant, Vakgroep Arbeids- en Organisatiepsychologie, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium.

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