

Classifying Acquiescent Respondents: Convergence or Divergence of Categorization Approaches? *

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Sunghee Lee¹, Rachel Davis², Ken Resnicow¹,
Tim Johnson³

¹. University of Michigan; ². University of South Carolina

³. University of Illinois-Chicago

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Outline

- Acquiescent Response Style
- Data
- Methods
- Results
- Implications

Acquiescent Response Style

- ARS as a trait
(vs. specific to topic, mode or situation)
- Can we classify respondents as acquiescers vs. nonacquiescers?
- How?
 - Not easy; No clear guidelines in operationalizing ARS
 - E.g., Baumgartner and Steenkamp, 2002
 - Illogical responses to balanced scales
 - A set of heterogeneous items

Baumgartner, H., & Steenkamp, J. B. E. (2001). Response styles in marketing research: A cross-national investigation. *Journal of marketing research*, 38(2), 143-156.

Data – 1

- Telephone survey designed to examine ARS cross-racial-ethnically
- n=401; roughly equally divided into
 - Non-Latino Whites
 - Latino: Mexican Americans
 - Latino: Cuban Americans
 - Latino: Puerto Ricans

Data – 2

- Sample description (n=401)

Character	%	Character	%	Character	%
Age:		Education: ^a		Race/Ethnic:	
18-35 yrs	26.4	1-6 th grade	9.7	White	24.7
36-50 yrs	21.0	7-12 th grade	16.4	Mexican	24.9
51-64 yrs	29.7	HS/GED	23.3	Cuban	25.2
65+ yrs	22.9	Some college	21.2	Puerto Rican	25.2
Gender:		College deg.	18.7	Int. Language	
Female	69.6	Graduate deg.	10.7	Spanish	51.4

^a Education missing on 10 cases

Data – 3

- 100 attitudinal items with a 7-pt Likert scale
 - 10 items: Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; balanced)
 - 10 items: Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES; balanced)
 - 44 items: 22 pairs on wide range of topics; written in opposite directions
 - (e.g., “It is healthier to eat while standing up.” & “It is better for your body to sit down while you eat.”)
 - 21 items: heterogeneous on mundane or bogus topics
 - (e.g., “The Trans-Atlantic Cultural Partnership would be a good thing for the United States.”)
 - 15 items: Remainder (e.g., “Humor cures all.”)

Methods – 1

- Acquiescer classification approaches

Classification	Items	Method
P_100	All	Proportion of AR; Median as cut-off
PS_SE	PSS+RSSE	Illogical AR to both scales
I_PR	Item pairs	Illogical AR to any pair
I_PR_P	Item pairs	Proportion of illogical AR; Median
HET	Heterogeneous	AR score (2=SA; 1=A; 0=Rest); Median
P_15	Remainder 15	Proportion of AR; Median
LCA	PSS+RSSE	LCA with AR – 2 classes
CFA	PSS+RSSE	CFA with a style factor; Median factor score

Methods – 2

- Basic descriptive statistics

Classification	n	# Items	Base score	% Aqrs
P_100	401	100	Median AR prop.: 46.4%	50.1%
PS_SE	401	20	NA	33.7%
I_PR	401	44	NA	82.5%
I_PR_P	401	44	Median illogical AR prop.: 13.6%	53.1%
HET	401	21	Median AR score: 0.778	49.6%
P_15	401	15	Median AR prop.: 60.0%	54.9%
LCA ^a	370	20	NA	73.5%
CFA ^a	370	20	Median style factor score: -0.191	50.0%

^a 31 cases responded to not all 20 items

Methods – 3

- Relationship across classifications through φ coefficients
- Correlates of acquiescers through multivariate models
 - For overall sample: Age, Gender, Education, Race/ethnicity+interview language
 - For Latino sample: Age, Gender, Education, Interview language, Latino ethnicity, Acculturation

Results

1. Relationship across classifications: φ coefficients

	P_100	PS_SE	I_PR	I_PR_P	HET	P_15	LCA
P_100							
PS_SE	0.383						
I_PR	0.435	0.258					
I_PR_P	0.732	0.363	0.489				
HET	0.631	0.348	0.325	0.523			
P_15	0.619	0.296	0.322	0.534	0.389		
LCA	0.473	0.568	0.282	0.440	0.341	0.351	
CFA	0.330	0.109	0.175	0.287	0.303	0.261	0.355

$p < 0.1$

$p < 0.05$

$p < 0.001$

Results

2. Correlates of acquiescers: Overall sample

	P_100	PS_SE	I_PR	I_PR_P	HET	P_15	LCA	CFA
Age (yrs)	0.004	0.004	0.002	0.003	0.006	0.000	0.004	0.003
Fe v. Male	0.043	-0.048	-0.020	0.065	-0.020	0.056	0.019	0.044
>HS v. <HS	-0.191	-0.194	-0.072	-0.121	-0.165	-0.173	-0.085	0.164
HS v. <HS	0.018	-0.027	0.025	0.061	0.045	-0.016	0.027	0.119
L_EN v. W	0.222	0.143	0.101	0.175	0.044	0.174	0.176	0.061
L_SP v. W	0.422	0.264	0.195	0.480	0.208	0.345	0.383	0.295
R^2	0.255	0.152	0.097	0.277	0.169	0.135	0.218	0.089

$p < 0.1$

$p < 0.05$

$p < 0.001$

Results

2. Correlates of acquiescers: Latinos only

	P_100	PS_SE	I_PR	I_PR_P	HET	P_15	LCA	CFA
Age (yrs)	0.003	0.005	0.001	0.002	0.004	-0.001	0.005	0.001
Fe v. Male	0.045	-0.026	-0.045	0.033	-0.047	0.084	0.032	0.027
>HS v. <HS	-0.212	-0.165	-0.046	-0.159	-0.214	-0.158	-0.074	0.109
HS v. <HS	0.007	-0.027	0.018	0.043	0.007	-0.048	0.044	0.080
SP v. EN Int.	0.025	0.013	0.097	-0.032	-0.016	-0.008	-0.004	-0.119
MX v. CB	0.057	0.088	0.087	-0.001	-0.138	0.040	0.028	0.019
PR v. CB	0.123	0.170	0.050	-0.008	-0.126	0.165	0.083	0.001
+ L v. +W	0.317	0.107	0.034	0.134	0.133	0.238	0.029	0.042
H Bi v. +W	0.113	0.200	0.072	0.076	-0.026	0.052	0.004	-0.013
L Bi v. +W	-0.208	-0.042	-0.104	-0.354	-0.292	-0.110	-0.132	-0.253
R^2	0.199	0.124	0.087	0.209	0.175	0.094	0.150	0.089

$p < 0.1$

$p < 0.05$

$p < 0.001$

Implications – 1

- Moderate yet significant convergence among classifications
 - ARS as a respondent trait
- Correlates are generally in predicted directions
 - More likely to be acquiescers
 - Older
 - Low education
 - Latinos, Spanish interviews in particular
 - Latino-specific correlates no clear pattern
- CFA style factor: More than ARS

Implications – 2

- Developing a screener for acquiescers
 - Illogical ARs to PSS and RSES
 - Only 20 items
 - Straight forward to implement
 - Less problematic with item nonresponse
 - Strong relationship with LCA indicator ($\varphi=0.568$) and reasonable relationship with other indicators ($\varphi\approx 0.3$)
 - Correlates in predicted directions (Older age, Low education, Latino, and Spanish interview)
 - % Acquiescers:
 - NHW: 16.6%
 - Latino_English: 25.0%
 - Latino_Spanish: 46.5%

Thanks!

sungheel@umich.edu