



ELSEVIER

Available online at www.sciencedirect.com

SCIENCE @ DIRECT®

Personality and Individual Differences 38 (2005) 1891–1902

PERSONALITY AND
INDIVIDUAL DIFFERENCES

www.elsevier.com/locate/paid

The effects of social desirability bias on applied measures of goal orientation [☆]

James A. Tan ^{a,*}, Rosalie J. Hall ^b

^a *Department of Psychology, University of Wisconsin-Stout, Menomonie, WI 54751, USA*

^b *Department of Psychology, The University of Akron, Akron, OH 44325-4301, USA*

Received 31 March 2004; received in revised form 18 October 2004; accepted 23 November 2004

Available online 11 February 2005

Abstract

This research examined the extent to which social desirability responding influences two measures of goal orientation tailored to work (VandeWalle, 1997) and academic (Midgley et al., 1998) domains. Method bias analyses indicated a significant negative influence of social desirability on responses to learning goal items, and a significant positive influence of social desirability responding on performance-avoid goal items, with the VandeWalle scale showing larger effects than the Midgley et al. scale. Performance-approach goal items showed minimal effects of social desirability responding. Results are discussed with respect to the use of these measures in larger models of motivation and performance.

© 2005 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

Keywords: Goal orientation; Social desirability

1. Introduction

When a measure is used for research purposes, the implicit assumption made is that it measures the intended construct, and no other. Under some circumstances, this assumption is open to

[☆] A previous version of this manuscript was presented at the 16th annual conference of the Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology, San Diego, CA, April 2001.

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +1 715 232 5224; fax: +1 715 232 5303.

E-mail address: tanj@uwstout.edu (J.A. Tan).

explicit testing, often using factor analysis and related techniques. Here, we demonstrate one manner in which this issue might be addressed, in a study of the extent and manner in which social desirability bias may contaminate measures of goal orientation.

1.1. Overview of goal orientation

Goals and standards play a critical role in virtually every comprehensive theory of self-regulation and performance in applied settings. When goals involve learning, change, or the acquisition of new skills, an important distinction can be made between different types of broad goals that might be adopted—specifically, whether goals focus the learner on information related to task mastery, or on more global assessments of his or her competence. Which of these two types of goal is being pursued has important motivational implications for learner self-efficacy, task initiation and persistence (especially when there is initial failure), feedback-seeking, and ultimately, level of performance (Beaubien & Payne, 1999; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997).

Goal orientation has been extensively studied in the educational field (e.g., Duda & Nicholls, 1992; Dweck, 1986), and its application to the workplace (especially related to issues of training, skill maintenance, feedback-seeking, and performance) has also received increased scrutiny in recent years (Beaubien & Payne, 1999; Button, Mathieu, & Zajac, 1996; Farr, Hofmann, & Ringenbach, 1993; Schmidt & Ford, 2003; VandeWalle, Brown, Cron, & Slocum, 1999; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997). Important initial development of the constructs and their measurement comes from Dweck and her colleagues (Dweck, 1986; Dweck & Leggett, 1988; Elliot & Dweck, 1988). Their work identified two classes of intellectual achievement goals. Goals where individuals were concerned either with gaining favorable judgments of their competence or avoiding negative judgments of their competence were termed *performance goals*, and goals where individuals were concerned with increasing their competence or understanding and mastering something new were termed *learning goals*.

Later work has expanded considerably upon Dweck's original research, suggesting that goal orientations can be further subdivided, with corresponding development of new measures. Many researchers advocate two performance orientation components, distinguishing between goals of garnering favorable evaluations from others versus avoiding negative evaluations (and some make a similar approach-avoid distinction for learning goals also, e.g., Elliot & Thrash, 2002). In addition, a growing body of empirical research demonstrates relations of goal orientation with other important variables. Often the models tested are complex and multivariate in nature, thus good measurement is crucial. Here, we examine the extent to which social desirability may contribute to common method variance in measures of goal orientation and the extent to which it biases estimates of the relations among goal orientation constructs.

2. Potential biasing effects of social desirability

Social desirability refers to people's tendency to present themselves in a favorable light. This tendency may be problematic in self-report questionnaire research because it can be a source of common method bias, which may mask true relations or produce spurious relations among variables (Ganster, Hennessey, & Luthans, 1983). Paulhus (1984, 1994) suggests that there are two

متن کامل مقاله

دریافت فوری ←

ISIArticles

مرجع مقالات تخصصی ایران

- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه تمام متن مقالات انگلیسی
- ✓ امکان دانلود نسخه ترجمه شده مقالات
- ✓ پذیرش سفارش ترجمه تخصصی
- ✓ امکان جستجو در آرشیو جامعی از صدها موضوع و هزاران مقاله
- ✓ امکان دانلود رایگان ۲ صفحه اول هر مقاله
- ✓ امکان پرداخت اینترنتی با کلیه کارت های عضو شتاب
- ✓ دانلود فوری مقاله پس از پرداخت آنلاین
- ✓ پشتیبانی کامل خرید با بهره مندی از سیستم هوشمند رهگیری سفارشات