

Crim 860

Assignment 2: Creating a Likert Scale

A previous 860 class decided to create a Likert scale dealing with views about drug policies, and especially the extent to which people were more in favour of harm reduction strategies versus more punitive criminal justice strategies. For the first part of the assignment, each student sent me six (6) statements that we could potentially use in such a scale. Two were supposed to be “poor” statements, accompanied by an explanation of why the student believed them to be “poor” items. The remaining four statements were intended to be “good” items for inclusion in the scale; two were written in a “positive” direction, while the other two were written in a “negative” direction. After I received all the statements, I put them together in a survey format and each student was instructed to send a survey link to friends and family – a convenience sample. We ended up with 126 respondents among the class and others.

For this Assignment, see the email I sent you on Thursday, October 8th, which contained an attached SPSS data file from the survey as well as a copy of the [survey](#) and [frequency distributions](#) from Survey Monkey. Your job in this assignment is to use these data to create a scale of attitudes about how to deal with people addicted to drugs. Send me a brief report explaining the choices you made along the way, a copy of your final scale, and an explanation of what you would do next, after you do the following:

- a. We started with an item pool of 82 statements, roughly half of which were written in a pro-harm reduction direction, and the other half in more of a “criminal” direction. You can see the full list of items and whether their author considered each one to be positively or negatively worded here. Let’s say that we are hoping to end up with a scale that’s 12-ish items long.
- b. Perform the next steps on your own or with a partner where you do successive iterations of computing a tentative total, computing item-whole correlations, and using that information to successively whittle down the pool of items to put together a tentative scale, explaining why you chose the particular set of items that you did.
- c. Compute a split-half reliability (to pay homage to Likert) along with the [Spearman Brown Prophecy](#) and compute [Cronbach’s alpha](#) for your scale.
- d. Question 84 asked respondents to self-report an overall attitude about whether they were more in favour of criminalizing versus harm reduction approaches. How might you use responses to that question as a preliminary validation measure? Feel free to do the analysis if you know how.
- e. Let’s say that we decide that the scale you create in (b) is one we will go forward with and subject to further analysis. What would you be looking to do before you would feel comfortable actually using it in a research situation, e.g., if Vancouver’s Mayor were to ask you to evaluate Vancouverite’s support for harm reductionist versus criminalizing approaches to addictions, or if you were now interested in looking at other correlates of those attitudes?

Your assignment is due by 23 October.