



Scale Construction and Development in Political and Social Science Research

Workshop

Organised by Prof. Hans-Peter Blossfeld

Speaker: Prof. Tenko Raykov (Michigan State University)

Date: 11 April 2016, 9.00 – 15.00

12 April 2016, 9.00 – 15.00

Sala del Capitolo, Badia Fiesolana

European University Institute, Florence, Italy

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Workshop Outline

Political and social scientists are frequently involved in the development and revision of multiple-component measuring instruments, such as scales, polls, inventories, questionnaires, surveys, subscales, etc. Scores obtained from these highly popular instruments are usually employed subsequently in various analyses addressing substantive research questions. The degree to which these scales are of high quality determines the extent to which the end results of the following analyses and modelling efforts can be trusted. This requires that the researcher engages in multiple activities aimed at constructing initial versions of the measuring instruments and possibly multiple revisions of their tentative variants, with the goal of improving their psychometric quality. This two-day workshop provides a thorough introduction to the field of scale construction and development in the political and social sciences, in particular as relevant for empirical settings where measuring instruments are considered for use that are characterized by multiple components or items with no guessing.

Throughout the seminar, many empirical examples are utilized from these disciplines. The popular latent variable modelling software Mplus is used for all examples, along with a detailed discussion of command syntax and output interpretation.

Participants in this workshop can expect to come away with:

1. A nuanced understanding of the conceptual foundations and basic mathematical and statistical relationships underlying social and behavioural instrument construction and development.
2. The ability to understand, interpret and explain the output from the used software for achieving the goals of psychometric scale construction and revision.
3. An appreciation of the advantages of a thorough study of the underlying latent structure of a tentative version of a multi-component instrument under consideration.
4. Practical tools and strategies for constructing an initial version of a scale of interest and its revision aimed at improving its quality.
5. The ability to improve a given measuring instrument, in order to achieve higher measurement quality.
6. The capability to deal with issues arising in the practice of scale construction and development.

Keywords: multiple-component measuring instrument, scale construction, scale development, political and social sciences, latent variable modelling, psychometric theory

~Requirements for credits: 2 - day attendance and submission of assignment ~

Reference:

Raykov, T., & Marcouides, G. A. (2011). *Introduction to Psychometric Theory*. New York: Taylor & Francis.



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